
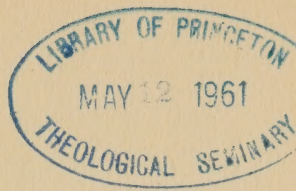


BV 1470.3 .P7 M33 1960
Maguire, Clyde Merrill.
J. M. Price



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

J. M. Price
Portrait of a Pioneer



J. M. Price

PORTRAIT OF A PIONEER

Clyde Merrill Maguire



BROADMAN PRESS

Nashville, Tennessee

© 1960 • BROADMAN PRESS
Nashville, Tennessee

All rights reserved
International copyright secured

424-09044

Library of Congress catalog card number: 60-14145

Printed in the United States of America

4.MY60K.S.P.

Contents

1. The Inimitable Price	1
2. My Old Kentucky Home	9
3. Taught to the Tune of a Hickory Stick	19
4. Go West, Young Man	29
5. Through Days of Preparation	38
6. This Is My Task	47
7. Pioneer Days	58
8. To Mabel, My Wife	69
9. Here I Raise Mine Ebenezer	79
10. Sometimes 'mid Scenes of Deepest Gloom	86
11. Dear as the Apple of Thine Eye	96
12. Blazing Three New Trails	104
13. The Man Himself	112
14. Determination, Wreathed in a Smile	123
15. Time to Retire	132

The Inimitable Price

IT WAS THE FIRST DAY of a statewide Sunday school clinic. Pastors and laymen from far and near crowded the sanctuary of the large First Baptist Church. Educational directors combed the crowd with their eyes, checking to see if all their workers had arrived. Everyone waited expectantly for the principal speaker of the morning, Dr. J. M. Price.

The program was a long one. It had started at nine o'clock. There had been singing, devotions, demonstrations, and now it was time for a brief recess, enabling tired clinicians to stand and stretch. Coffee was served in the fellowship hall, and congenial groups got together to chat while they sipped their steaming drinks. Pastors congregated in one corner. Educational directors compared notes in another. Lay workers divided themselves into many circles and spoke of their impressions of the day's activities. There were conjectures about what was to come. One group's conversation went:

"This main speaker, this Dr. J. M. Price, had better be good, or I won't stay awake. I have mental indigestion now from being exposed to so much knowledge in one short morning."

"Oh, you'll stay awake all right," came the reply. "I heard Dr. Price speak at our state assembly last year. He packed more helpful information into a brief thirty minutes than anyone I'd ever heard, but he put enough fun in it to keep us from getting tired."

A third spoke up: "He's a wonder. I was a student of his at Southwestern Seminary a quarter of a century ago. He never forgets his students. Wait and see. When I go up front to speak to him at noon, he'll flash his million dollar smile, then say, 'Well, look who's here—a girl I knew thirty pounds ago!' or 'Well, here you are! I declare, I believe you're more *outstanding* than you used to be!' He always has something funny to say."

Another chimed in: "I heard him at Ridgecrest last summer; so I'm warning you to get your pencil and notebook ready. You'll want to keep his outline. He was the most helpful speaker we had during Sunday School Week. It's amazing how much help I get from reviewing the notes I took from his addresses."

"Is he really good?" queried the first, doubtfully. "He must be pretty old. I read in the paper that he headed the School of Religious Education at Southwestern for forty-one years. And he's retired now."

"You never think of age when you think of Dr. Price," declared his former student. "I happen to know he's seventy-five years old, but he looks, talks, and acts just about like he did when I was at Seminary Hill. And even though he's retired from his work as dean of the School of Religious Education, he teaches three days a week at Hardin-Simmons University. He's in constant demand as a teacher and speaker. I saw Mrs. Price recently, and she told me he spent twenty-six weeks away from home last year, teaching and lecturing."

"He doesn't look like a fellow who knows all that much," mused another, "judging from his picture, that is. He looks more like a country preacher to me."

This declaration was greeted with laughter. His former student declared: "He *was* a country preacher for years and years. Fact is, he served one rural church near Fort Worth for twenty-one years. His was a dual role—head of a great school during the week, country pastor on the weekend. He's plenty smart! I doubt if you'll ever know anyone who has more degrees. Why, if they were all strung out behind his name here on the pro-

gram, he would be listed: John Milburn Price, B.S., B.A., M.A., Th.M., Th.D., Ph.D., LL.D."

"Mercy, that's terrifying! That makes me afraid to go up and meet him at noon as I'd planned to."

"Why, you needn't be afraid of him! He's the most unpretentious man I ever knew. No one has ever accused him of being enamored with his success. He'll want to meet you. Folks are important to him because they're folks and have possibility of growth, not because they're big shots. And he's always himself. He never puts on for anyone. That's why he's so natural and relaxed in all circumstances."

The educational directors' group was enjoying reminiscing. Many of them had been students of Dr. Price, and each was telling his favorite yarn about his former teacher. One said: "I'm glad they brought the Sage of Seminary Hill to this meeting. I want to see if he has some new jokes and witticisms. His remark that I recall most often is, 'There is no pain in the world like the pain of undelivered speech!' Remember?"

"Sure, we remember that proverb," answered the wife of an educational director. "But the thing that's outstanding in my mind is the way he enjoyed insulting folks. Of course, he did it with such good humor nobody ever got mad with him. My last name started with *R*, and I was always so far down the list that I said in exasperation one day, 'If I ever get married, I'm going to marry an *Aaron*!' He looked me over and answered, 'If you ever get married, you'll probably marry a moron!'"

"He still enjoys being insulting," exclaimed the educational director of a large church in a neighboring city. "We had him spend a week in our church a few months ago to teach one of his books. On Wednesday night I said to the class: 'Dr. Price hasn't told us anything about the examination he'll give at the end of the week. If it's like the ones he used to give at Seminary Hill, you'd better get down to work. Start reading the book and studying hard!' When he got up, he said in his dry manner, 'About my exam, if you turn in papers as poor as those your

educational director turned in when he was a student, you'll really have something to worry about!"

A woman laughed: "He loves his insults all right. In the last talk I heard him make, he referred to a lady who had 'kept the BSU spirit, but acquired a WMU figure!' And he looked right at me when he said it."

A young woman interrupted: "But with all his insults, he's one of the kindest persons I know. A year ago I attended one of these clinics in another state. Somehow my purse was lost or stolen. I had to borrow money for my trip home. And it never occurred to me to go to anyone but my old teacher. I asked him for money as trustingly as I would have asked my father. And he was glad to help me. He kidded me into laughing about my predicament instead of crying."

Another said: "Your mentioning his kindness reminds me of the story he has used with every student generation to illustrate the choleric type of temperament. I know you remember it, but I always enjoy repeating it!

"A man went to a banker who had one glass eye to borrow money. After checking his credit carefully and extensively, the banker was undecided whether or not to make the loan. Finally, he said, 'If you can tell which is my glass eye, I will lend you the money.' Immediately the man pointed it out, and the banker asked in amazement, 'How did you do it?' 'Well,' the man replied, 'the glass eye seemed to have just a glint of sympathy that the other did not.'"

"I hope we remember the principles and methods he taught us as well as we remember his stories. I suppose he has trained more educational directors than any other man, living or dead."

"That's true. You remember Southern Seminary did not vote to organize into three separate schools until 1953, more than thirty years after Southwestern had done this. And I believe New Orleans Seminary organized its School of Religious Education in 1952."

"While Price and Southwestern had been 'going on forever'

—at least since 1915! We'll never really realize how much we owe this man who pioneered in the field of religious education."

"What a man he is! Unraveling his character is like peeling an onion. The more layers you peel off, the more you find to peel. I think his physical stamina is remarkable. I heard him say that on a trip out West, just before he came to the seminary, he climbed Pikes Peak, making the nine-mile trip in seven hours."

"When he was sixty-six years old, he made a trip to Europe, Egypt, and Palestine. When he was in Egypt, he climbed to the top of the highest pyramid. That's Cheops, you know. I'd be panting yet if I had done it! And later he walked almost to the top of Mount Sinai. And on his seventy-fifth birthday he went hunting and killed a squirrel. But folks don't think much about his physical prowess. It's his intellect that makes men marvel."

"Or his determination, or his efficiency, or his infinite capacity for work!"

"There *are* lots of peelings on the onion! But in my opinion the most outstanding is his genuine goodness, his high moral standards. Not one of us who ever attended his classes failed to realize that while he wanted us to get knowledge and learn skills, his greatest ambition for us was that we become fine, worthwhile personalities."

The preachers' group, too, was talking about the man who soon would speak. One chuckled: "It will be good to hear Dr. Price again, won't it? When he retired back in 1956, I was with the Southwestern students who are employed in the Training Union Department of the Sunday School Board at Nashville. They sent him a wire that went like this, 'All our love to the man who cannot be topped when it comes to jokes, grins, twinkles, buttermilk, heart and brains.'"

"The man who cannot be topped"—that's a good characterization of him. I read the other day, 'The teacher lights many candles which in later years shine back to brighten his path.' It might brighten his path to know how much good I got from his classes. I'll admit that when I was a seminary student I took his

courses for one reason only. They were required for preachers! But they've been mighty helpful in my ministry, particularly when I first started out and had to direct the educational program of my church myself."

"I'll say 'amen' to their helpfulness. I've wondered if, as I listen to him today, that old feeling of awe would come welling up within me. I used to wonder how the head of one small fellow could contain so much knowledge."

"I wondered at both his knowledge and his assurance. What a surprise I got recently when I read the book *Of Parsons and Profs!* Inman Johnson says in there that Dr. Price dropped in a dead faint when he came out of his doctoral examination at Louisville. I'll admit those exams are grueling endurance tests, but I can't imagine *his* fainting."

"But 'Prof' Johnson didn't tell all the story! Mrs. Price told me once that her husband's tonsils had been removed just two weeks before his examination. He was weak as he faced his questioners, but got along famously. Just as he was congratulating himself that his ordeal was almost over, Dr. Mullins came stomping in, fresh as a daisy. He had been visiting army camps, felt fine, and started firing questions at Price, who up and fainted. I can't say that I blame him!"

Another asked: "Have any of you been back to the campus since the Price Building was completed? I believe it houses the School of Religious Education now."

"Yes. I have seen it, and it's a marvelous building. A large oil painting of Dr. Price hangs near the entrance. And that's most appropriate. You remember that Ralph Waldo Emerson said, 'An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man.' That school is certainly his lengthened shadow. He began it, developed it, and made it into a school that's recognized around the world. For a little man he has certainly cast a long shadow!"

A Chinese young man stood near the entrance of the sanctuary, holding something in his hand. As one of the faculty members for the week approached, he exclaimed eagerly: "See

this book? It's a Chinese translation of Dr. Price's *Jesus the Teacher*. I brought it to get his autograph."

"Chinese, huh? I knew his book had been translated into Spanish and Portuguese, but I didn't realize it was available in Chinese, too. Did you know more than a quarter of a million of his books have been sold?"

"Oh, yes. I know that he has written Training Union study course books, Sunday school study course books, and college textbooks. I know that he has edited other books and collaborated in writing still others. I feel that it is through his writing he has made his greatest contribution."

"I don't know about that. Teacher, administrator, preacher, lecturer, writer—which facet of his life shines brightest? I can't decide, but I always think of him as the inimitable Price. But, listen, the piano is giving the signal to reassemble."

Recess was over. The audience took its place in anticipation of the message. After a song, the main speaker was presented very simply: "Dr. J. M. Price of Fort Worth, Texas, will lead us each morning this week in a discussion of *Jesus the Teacher*."

The gray-haired man who stood to speak had a pronounced twinkle in his kindly blue eyes and a smile that brought instant rapport with his audience. He was slight of build, a man five feet eight inches tall, one who was extremely proud of the fact that in the last few years he had been able to tip the scales at 150 pounds.

He made a joking reference to the fact that he had his notes with him. "I didn't want to be like the preacher who forgot his sermon. He preached on the topic 'The Four Isms—Secularism, Materialism, Atheism, and Communism.' Just as he came to the climax of his message, he had a lapse of memory. He thundered: 'Down with atheism! Down with materialism! Down with communism! Down with . . . rheumatism!'"

After the ripple of laughter subsided, he gave a sincere tribute to Sunday school teachers, stating that he considered them the greatest force for good in the nation. Then he launched into

his message on Jesus the Teacher—a message that held forth challenge to the task that was theirs.

The weary audience revived as he spoke to them. Pencils were busy. Faces were rapt until they broke into chuckles at his frequent witty stories. Finally, the congregation rose for the benediction, inspired and rededicated to their task.

The crowd surged down the aisle to shake hands with the speaker. "Tell me more about him," said one. "He may be a little man, but he's taller than he stands. He's a—he's a small giant."

"Yes, there's no one like him—absolutely no one. It would be impossible to estimate what he has done to promote the cause of religious education. When I try to describe him, I borrow Shakespeare's words and change the tense of the verbs from past to present:

His life is gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "This is a man!"

My Old Kentucky Home

IF YOU LOOK ON THE MAP for Fair Dealing, Kentucky, you will not be able to find it. It was never very large—only a store and a post office; and they have long since passed into oblivion. But always when J. M. Price is asked, “Where were you born?” he replies proudly and promptly, “On a farm near Fair Dealing, Kentucky.” The words “Fair Dealing” roll off his tongue like a melody. They have become far more than the name of his birth-place; they are his way of life as well. This is a man who believes in putting into life what you expect out of it.

Should you confess that you don’t know where Fair Dealing is, or was, Dr. Price will look at you sadly, as if wondering how anyone with such colossal ignorance about geography ever managed to achieve even a lowly place in life. Then he will tell you: “Fair Dealing is in Marshall County, in west Kentucky, eight miles from Benton, the county seat. And surely you realize that Benton was named for the West’s first great statesman—tall, handsome Thomas Hart Benton, who served as a U.S. Senator from Missouri for thirty years.” If you pretend to know your history, he may add, “Benton is in the famous ‘Pennyryle’ district, you know—named for the variety of mint plants that used to be common in the area.”

No man has the privilege of choosing his parents, but J. M. Price was exceedingly fortunate in having the father and mother that were chosen for him. He could exclaim with the psalmist,

"Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name" (61:5). Eugenics was certainly in his favor.

His father, John Powers Price, soon after the close of the dreadful War Between the States, in which he had served with distinction, took as his bride Elizabeth Goheen McLeod. Both of the young people had good health, splendid character, tremendous courage, and great powers of endurance. Their marriage took place on January 11, 1866, when they were 26 and 22 years of age. They lived together for more than fifty years and reared a family that brought honor and distinction to the family name.

John Powers Price was of Irish descent. He was born in Tennessee, but followed a married sister to Marshall County, Kentucky, when he was nineteen years old. One look at the thickly wooded, rolling hills, the green meadows with their fat cattle, the clear creeks with fish just begging to be caught caused him to decide that Kentucky would be his state by adoption for the remainder of his life. Almost as quickly he decided that Neighbor McLeod's daughter, Elizabeth, was the girl he'd like to have for his wife. But the rumble of civil war was in the air, and he must fight beside his fellows before he could court a girl and establish a home.

He enlisted in Company G, Third Kentucky Mounted Infantry, Confederate States of America, under the famous General Nathan Bedford Forrest. This was the Forrest who was noted for the statement that the winner in battle is the one who gets there "the fustest with the mostest." After the war Price returned to Kentucky, married his sweetheart, and lived on the farm purchased from her father until the day he died. He had four great loves in his life: his family, his farm, his church, and the Democratic party. To each of them he gave his best effort.

In the early days after the war, money was practically nonexistent in the South, and debt was not to be tolerated. So the home that John and Elizabeth built on their 480-acre farm was a very modest one. It was originally a one-room log house, 18

by 18 feet, with a half-story upstairs. A kitchen, dining room, and smokehouse adjoined. Supporting the ceiling in the living room were three long pine logs about 8 x 10 inches, hewn out, which had been rescued from a raft floating down the Tennessee River. The house was located on a beautiful wooded hillside, about one hundred yards from the road. As their family grew and their income allowed it, John and Elizabeth added to their home.

To their union eight children were born. Two of them died in infancy. An epidemic of spinal meningitis took another during his college days. Four boys and a girl lived long and useful lives. The oldest son, Norman, never married. He stayed on the farm with his parents. The sister married and moved to Hardin, eight miles from the family home. The next two boys, Joe and Olis, were lawyers who served for many years as judges, Olis in Oklahoma City, Joe in Paducah. Joe served for about twenty-eight years as district judge in the post occupied by Irvin Cobb's famous old Judge Priest.

The youngest boy, with whom this book is concerned, was born November 21, 1884, when his parents had reached the ages 45 and 41. His coming was heralded with joy by Olis, who was 4; Joe, who was 7; Albert, aged 11; Mahalah, who was 14; and big brother Norman, who was 16. An article describing the contribution J. M. Price has made in the securing of recognition for religious education contains this sentence: "Little did John and Elizabeth Price realize that they were to rear an educator, author, editor, orator, and minister." Although they were unaware of the outstanding things he would accomplish in adulthood, the parents felt that he must have a name that was exactly right. Because they could not decide on that name, he was simply "the baby" for several weeks.

Then his mother carried him in her arms to a preaching service in the Cap Spring schoolhouse. Rev. J. H. Milburn, the visiting minister, brought a powerful message on "The Humiliation of Christ." Elizabeth was converted. She gave her life to the Lord

and the preacher's name to her small son. He was listed in the family Bible as John Milburn Price and was called Milburn until he left Kentucky and began to use his initials.

Yes, eugenics was in his favor. His father was a stalwart who could look the world in the eye without flinching. At the time of his death, the newspaper eulogy listed and described his illustrious family. It mentioned that he died at eighty, that he served in the Confederate Army, and that he was a lifelong Democrat. The closing sentence stated, "Mr. Price has been a member of the Missionary Baptist Church for 49 years and was a quiet, peaceable Christian gentleman."

But it was from his mother that J. M. Price inherited many of his character traits. Did this devoted woman realize as she worked with him that she was training one who would train many?

Elizabeth Goheen McLeod Price was of Scotch descent. Her family could be traced back to the McLeod clan in Scotland. She had the economical attitude of the Scotch and passed that spirit on to her children, especially to her baby son.

Students through the years have poked kindly fun at J. M. Price for his economies, particularly in the matter of dress. Those of a generation ago remember his green felt hat—green not with envy, but with age. Back in the time when seminary students staged a faculty take-off each year, the intrepid student who was to represent Dr. Price borrowed one of his seersucker suits from Mrs. Price. The daring young man slept in it the night before the performance, declaring that he wanted "to get the proper effect."

Elizabeth Price was a prodigious worker, and this characteristic, too, she passed on to her children. With tireless energy she operated a flax wheel, an old-fashioned churn, and a loom. She made rugs, quilted quilts, and wove blankets in addition to the regular duties of the day. She had a dogged determination to accomplish the things she set out to achieve.

Dr. L. R. Scarborough, who was president of Southwestern

Seminary the first twenty-seven years that Dr. Price taught there, commented on the fact that Price had the same characteristic. He said that when this man came into his office to ask for something for the School of Religious Education he might as well let him have it. If he turned him down now, he would get his request sooner or later! It is a rule of J. M. Price's life to be sure he is right about a thing and then *never* to quit trying to bring it about.

His students through the years remember Dr. Price's lecture on "Factors Producing Personality." They recall that he stressed both eugenics and euthenics. As he started his discussion on eugenics, he startled sleepy students wide awake with the following story on heredity.

Two pickpockets stood on a crowded subway in New York City. The man felt a hand in his pocket and, turning quickly, saw a lady who was charming. They got acquainted and made amazing discoveries about each other. She was the number one pickpocket of Chicago. He was the number one pickpocket of New York City. Their acquaintance developed into friendship and love, and before long they were married. Naturally they were anxious that their child be the number one pickpocket of America, but they had a terrific disappointment when the child was born—one hand was not open.

They tried everything to get the hand opened, even consulted a psychiatrist. Finally, the child was taken to the old family physician, who pulled out his watch and dangled it with the chain and fob in front of the little infant. Slowly the closed right hand unfolded, and, to the surprise of everyone, it had been clutching tightly the midwife's wedding ring!

What a story for a dignified professor to tell! But dignity is not one of his outstanding characteristics.

Euthenics as well as eugenics operated in J. M. Price's behalf. His environment was a happy one. Every member of the family worked hard. Specific chores were assigned each child. To young Milburn went the assignment of splitting stovewood

for the large cookstove and carrying it into the house. He also cut and carried in logs for the huge fireplace, which was four feet in height and four feet in width. The appetite of that fireplace was the bane of his young life. In extremely cold weather it ate up a fourth of a cord of wood a day.

Then there was always water to be fetched. The spring near Bear Creek was about two hundred yards from the house. Water was carried from the spring until a cistern was built. In the dry season the cistern would sometimes give out of water. Then it was hauled in on the wagon.

As a boy, Milburn was given a small patch of land of his own. On it he raised peas, potatoes, tobacco, popcorn, and other commodities for sale. One year he made sixty-five dollars on one acre of tobacco. This money was saved for the education he was determined to have in the future. He also helped to look after the sheep and lambs. Occasionally, he was given an orphan lamb to raise and sell. The money from the lambs always brought him a pang of regret. It was not easy to part with his pets.

Like most boys brought up in tobacco country, Milburn tried to smoke. But one cigar convinced him that smoking was not for him. As he tried to ride his bicycle after his daring encounter with the cigar, he grew deathly sick. He never tried smoking again.

But life was not all work. After the chores were finished, the days were full of exciting activities. Milburn's favorite sports were rabbit and squirrel hunting. Sometimes he would carry a lunch in his pocket and stay out all day, even when snow was on the ground. He would sit on a log in the early afternoon, pull off his shoes, and wring the ice water out of his homemade wool socks. Once he killed ten squirrels without missing a shot, using his single-barreled twelve-gauge shotgun. This gun had been purchased with money he earned.

Another time he killed three quail. He rode horseback for three miles to the country store, sold the quail for twenty-five

cents, and invested the quarter in a box of No. 12 shotgun shells.

Many wonderful hours were spent on Bear Creek. There he learned to fish and to swim. Even today as he talks of boyhood days with just a hint of nostalgia, he will interrupt his story with the emphatic statement, "Bear Creek was the best part of town."

Nights were happy times in the Price home. Kerosene lamps were lit; but there was no need to waste matches, so they were lit from rolled paper. First, there was reading and studying. Then came the storytelling. Father would tell stories of the War Between the States. Particularly would he tell of his experiences in the Battles of Shiloh and Vicksburg. Shiloh was the most bitterly fought engagement of the entire war. Father would begin: "General Grant was enjoying a leisurely breakfast that Sunday morning. His army was cooking breakfast in the camps. Nobody expected trouble from us Rebs. Grant had not kept cavalry out watching for Confederates. Suddenly we swooped down on them."

Little Milburn's eyes would grow wide, as he would determine that all his life he would be alert.

Then the next story: "Vicksburg was a battle of endurance. Grant couldn't take the town by storm; so he settled down to starve it into surrender. For seven weeks the southerners held out. Why, folks were even eating horses and mules. That was all the meat there was. Men were dying of disease and starvation. Finally, on July 4, 1863, they surrendered." Milburn came to prize endurance as one of the great qualities of character. He particularly loved the next part of the story.

"A few friends and I did not surrender at Vicksburg. We de-toured around the Federal lines and escaped. When our group was finally forced to surrender at Selma, Alabama, our color bearer hid the flag in a hollow log. It was never captured." Courage and tenacity—those qualities Milburn determined to develop in his life.

J. M. Price can remember these stories today. He remembers

his father's tone of voice as he told them. And one of his prized possessions is his father's army rifle. Another is a hunter's horn bearing the date 1836. This horn was used by him as he hunted fox and coon in the Tennessee River bottom. His voice is almost wistful as he says, "This horn made a beautiful echo on the Tennessee River as we came across in a skiff about two o'clock in the morning."

Every day of his boyhood seemed packed with adventure. There was not much money in the Price home, but not much was needed except to buy an occasional wagon or buggy or farm implement. Practically everything that was used was raised on the family farm. Fruits and vegetables were canned and stored in the cellar. A peddler came by the house once a week. It was fun to bargain with him. The family would trade butter, eggs, and other commodities for Arbuckle coffee, Arm and Hammer soda, and the few necessities they did not produce. Milburn had his own money for trading with the peddler. He made this money by picking peas, digging potatoes, and doing other chores. His real enjoyment came from seeing how many things in the peddler's wagon he could do without. Money came too hard to squander. He did invest in a mandolin, so he could play with his brothers in a string band. His brothers played the violin and the guitar.

Sundays were wonderful days. As a youngster Milburn attended the Pleasant Hope Baptist Church, about a half-mile from his home. He loved this church, with its old-fashioned mourners' bench and its devoted church leaders. However, it had one of the numerous "fair weather" Sunday schools of that day, which ran only during summer and early fall when roads and weather were good. Most of the year it was closed. When this was the case, Milburn would walk the mile and a half to the Methodist Sunday school at Maple Springs. From his boyhood he had a profound respect for the Sunday school and the way it could influence a life.

When day was done, Milburn would climb to the half story

upstairs where he slept. The ceiling was low enough to touch with his feet when he lay in bed. And, oh, the daydreams that came as he lay in that bed! He dreamed of being a pioneer like the famous Daniel Boone, who led a group of restless men westward into the "second paradise" that later became Kentucky. He thought of his other pioneer hero, Simon Kenton. Then he thought of his two hounds, named for these two heroes. On this particular day the dogs had been very bad. They had chased rabbits through a field of growing wheat, doing considerable damage to the crop. Father had been angry about it, but his youngest son had said placatingly, "Father, I know it's hard on the wheat, but it's the making of the pups!" And Father had not punished the dogs after that plea.

Before he drifted off to sleep he thought of Kentucky's famous adopted son Henry Clay and decided that he, too, would rather be right than president. Drowsily, he dreamed of being a country preacher like Rev. Milburn, for whom he was named.

When he was thirteen years old, Milburn had an attack of typhoid fever. He lay awake at night and wished that he could be converted. However, as he explained later, "In our church no one was converted or baptized except during revival meetings, which were always held the first week in August; so I waited until the next August for the experience and looked forward anxiously to it." He was converted August 11, 1899, joined the Pleasant Hope Church August 12, and was baptized in the Tennessee River on August 13, as he was nearing his fifteenth birthday. Milburn and his family later moved their membership to the Hardin Baptist Church, where his sister was a member.

If Dr. Price tells you about his boyhood days he will likely say: "Ours was a religious family. The visiting preachers stayed at our house. And we would travel long distances to hear outstanding evangelists. My brother and I drove to Paducah in a buggy to hear Sam Jones preach, and that was thirty miles from home." Then his famous grin spreads all over his face and

he adds, "But honesty compels me to say that we drove that far to see a circus, too."

Men sometime lose their childhood faith. The poet Thomas Hood brooded over the fact that this happened to him. His poem goes:

I remember, I remember,
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from heaven
Than when I was a boy.¹

This was not true of J. M. Price. The faith that he found in his happy childhood in Kentucky deepened and developed as he matured, bringing him increasing joy through the years.

¹ *The Best Loved Poems of the American People*. Selected by Hazel Felleman (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Co., 1936), p. 403.

Taught to the Tune of a Hickory Stick

IN THE PRICE HOUSEHOLD in Kentucky parents instilled into their children a deep respect for preachers and teachers. When Milburn started to school, his father issued the ultimatum, "If you get a whipping in school, you will get another when you come home." When he recalls this, Dr. Price says: "Times have certainly changed. Nowadays, if a teacher whips a pupil, the father hurries to school to whip the teacher."

It is difficult for those who have attended the modern schools of recent years to picture the school situation in the South during the later years of the nineteenth century. Rural schools were simple one-room buildings. One teacher taught the entire school. The school session lasted only four or five months. Of necessity, all lessons were recited before the entire student body.

Milburn began his education at the Maple Springs school-house, a mile and a quarter from his home. There were fascinating things both to watch and to do as he walked this distance. Two-thirds of his way was through the timberlands, and he loved to feel the woods close around him, very dark and very deep. He crossed a winding branch of Bear Creek five times on his way to school. He could wade a bit on warm days, and sometimes he could watch a frog make a mighty leap. The last por-

tion of his trek was through a narrow lane, which became so muddy in bad weather that his brogan shoes sometimes would stick in the mud and be pulled off his feet. But this inconvenience seemed of little importance when he could watch squirrels and blue jays, frogs and cardinals; when he could chase butterflies or throw rocks at tree trunks.

School was interesting after he got there, too. Pupils in the one room ranged in age from about five to eighteen. He heard all the recitations—those in the McGuffey readers, the ones in the Barnes' American history, Peterson's Civil Government, Ray's arithmetic, and the big Eclectic Geography.

On Friday afternoons there were recitations, spelling matches, and debates to liven up the workday week. One of his first teachers was his cousin, J. N. Holland. Later his brother Joe taught him for several years. Teachers of that day felt that they must instruct in character building as well as in the three R's. Milburn became convinced that what a man is is much more important than what he says or does. He meditated on the truth of Milton's statement, "A good man is the ripe fruit our earth holds up to heaven."

One day the teacher asked that pupils write their favorite mottoes on the wall since there were few chalkboards. Young Milburn's motto remained on the wall for many years. He wrote, "I resolve to be diligent, for by diligence and patience the mouse bit in two the cable."

As Milburn progressed in his studies, he made a fine showing on everything except spelling. In this subject he seemed positively hopeless. He had no conception of elementary sounds. For example, when given a word like *cat*, he did not comprehend that it must begin with a *c*. Because he failed his spelling with such regularity, he was often made to stand on the platform facing his schoolmates for what seemed to him like hours. It was the worst punishment he could imagine. He tried to convince himself that spelling was not too important for a man. He remembered that Daniel Boone had learned reading, writ-

ing, "ciphering," and a very little spelling. But Daniel Boone's day had preceded his by a century and a half.

One day his brother Joe had a serious talk with him. Was he going through life unable to spell? He could learn to spell if he made up his mind to do it. What about that motto he had written, lauding diligence and patience? Joe was willing to help if Milburn would put forth a real effort.

The two of them began a "school after school." It meant drill, drill both afternoon and night. It meant giving up the wonderful fun he had been having after school hours. This was winter-time, and ice covered the steep hill on top of which their home stood in great dignity. Milburn had thought up the game of catching a pig or two, bringing them to the top of the hill, turning them loose suddenly, and watching them slide and squeal all the way down. Olis had joined him in this mischief, and even teacher Joe had enjoyed watching the sport. But now he must forego this fun and concentrate on his lessons. Very slowly, but very surely, he learned to spell.

There came a Friday afternoon that made up, in part, for all the humiliation he had suffered in standing on that platform, facing his schoolmates. The girls challenged the boys for a spelling match. They had no fears at all in issuing the challenge. Not only could the girls outspell the boys as a whole, but Nan Gregory, the crack speller from the adjoining district, had transferred to Maple Springs. The contest was in the bag!

Milburn rallied the boys to a diligent practice at the noon hour. The girls loitered near the earnest group to poke fun at them. But they noticed the boys had improved in their spelling; so they were a bit cautious when the afternoon match began. One by one they were spelled down. Finally, only two contestants were left—Nan and Milburn. To the surprise of everyone except teacher Joe, Milburn spelled down the hitherto unbeatable Nan. Oh, how sweet was the taste of victory! Milburn became the champion speller of the district and won a drinking cup as a prize. This cup remains a valued possession, for it re-

minds him that perseverance and diligence bring sure rewards.

A visitor to the seminary in recent days saw an old drawing—the first sketch of the proposed Religious Education building. She was amazed to see the date “1925” on the back of the drawing and asked in unbelief: “You mean you planned for this building in 1925 and didn’t get it until 1950? How did you keep your dream alive through twenty-five years?” After she heard the story of the drinking cup, she understood why J. M. Price believes in patience and persistence and why he has made them rules of his life.

Back in 1901 there was no such thing as graduation from elementary schools in the country. When a person felt that he had mastered reading, arithmetic, history, geography, spelling, civil government, physiology, and penmanship, he went to the county seat and took a two-day examination on these subjects. On February 5 sixteen-year-old Milburn and his deskmate rode in a buggy the eight miles to Benton over roads that were frozen and hard. Perhaps it was the trepidation in their hearts that made the weather seem so very cold. The ride home two days later seemed neither so long nor so arduous. They had passed. They now were proud possessors of common school diplomas, evidencing the fact that they had completed their elementary education. On the basis of this examination Milburn was given an appointment to the state university, but his family felt he should not accept. His brothers had attended Southern Normal School at Bowling Green, and that should be his school also.

Two years later Milburn journeyed to Benton to take another examination. His goal this time was the securing of a first-class teacher’s certificate, which would enable him to teach for four years. He was examined on eleven subjects, and his grade was $93\frac{9}{11}$. However, one recurring thought bothered him. His brother Joe was one of the examining board. Would anyone feel that Joe had shown partiality? Fear of criticism caused him to drive the twenty-two miles to Mayfield, county seat of Graves County, two weeks later, to take the examinations there. This

time his average was $94\frac{9}{11}$, the highest grade made by any participant. Now no one could say that Joe had favored him. More important, he could teach school in either Marshall or Graves County.

For the next two years he taught for part of the year and went to college after the short school term was finished.

His first teaching was a five months' session at the Cleveland School, commonly called the "Shoo Fly" School, two and one-half miles from the Price farm. There were thirty-seven pupils and he taught thirty-six classes, all the way from the chart class and first reader to higher arithmetic and algebra. The school began in late summer, and he stayed at home and walked to school, climbing three fences each way. His salary was thirty-two dollars a month, and he saved practically all of it for further education.

The young Kentucky schoolmaster was only eighteen. That may explain some of the extracurricular activities he recommended to his pupils. He wanted them to make the best showing of any school at the rally held at the county seat. He asked that the boys buy green ties and white caps and that the girls make green dresses. He taught them to march and to give yells as if they were a college group. Their special yell was:

Rickety Reen, Rickety Reen,
Caps of white and dresses green;
Razzle, dazzle, zickety zine,
Cleveland, Cleveland, number nine.

His pupils tried valiantly to live up to his high expectations for them. As he drilled them in marching, he asked that they put their left foot forward. He noticed one boy hopping along. When asked why he was doing this, the boy explained that he understood they were to *keep* the left foot forward.

His next school was at Unity, about seven miles from the Price home. His reputation as a thorough teacher had spread, and his salary was increased to \$33.50 a month. Now, how-

ever, he had to board away from home, and \$6.50 went for room, board, and "washing." On weekends he rode a mule home to visit his family. This school term began in early July and lasted six months. There were three trustees of the school, but one was unable to visit or check up since he was in the penitentiary for making counterfeit money.

No one doubted the knowledge, the character, or the ability of the young teacher. But there was one serious question concerning him. Would he be able to maintain discipline? After all, he was only nineteen and of small stature. Milburn Price knew that his ability as a disciplinarian was being discussed and wondered about.

In the district there was a family whose boys had been the terror of the school. The older brother had been conquered by the preceding teacher, but the younger brother showed up on the first day of school with a great air of bravado. He sat in the back of the room, talking and laughing. Young Price looked at him sternly and said, "After recess you will come up and take a front seat." His only answer was an impudent stare.

During recess the boy terror stood on the playground, looking menacingly in the direction of the teacher and displaying a long-bladed knife. When recess was over, he went back to his former seat and refused to come up front.

This was it. This was the showdown. If he failed to handle this boy, he was a failure as a teacher. Courage! Remember Father's courage at Vicksburg. So, not knowing what would happen, Price started after him. Just before he reached him, the boy jumped up, ran out of the schoolhouse, and dashed home; he never came back.

But before very long the young teacher looked out the window and saw the boy's mother approaching. Now the cold sweat started running down his back. You could whip a boy, but what did you do if his mother came at you? The minutes dragged like hours until he saw her pass the schoolhouse completely by. How sweet was his relief! Fortunately the pupils

did not sense the fact that he was shaken, and discipline was never difficult again.

Half the year was spent as teacher, the other half as pupil. He entered Southern Normal School at Bowling Green, Kentucky, in January, 1903, when he was eighteen years old. The school later became Western State College. He graduated with the B.S. degree on July 11, 1905, at the age of twenty.

It was fun to relax and be a student instead of a teacher who must maintain discipline. It was companionable and invigorating when Saturday rolled around to carry a supply of candles on a tramp out in the country and explore the numerous caves in the vicinity. He would return from these expeditions laden with beautiful stalactites and stalagmites.

It was customary for the graduating class at the Normal School to walk to Mammoth and Colossal Caves, thirty miles away, camping on the trip over and back. Some of the students did not mind catching rides on a wagon or buggy, if one came along. Milburn walked the entire distance and won a pair of shoes as a prize. The shoes did not last too long, but the memory of crossing Echo River in Mammoth Cave in a boat with other students, and singing as they crossed, has lasted for a lifetime.

Dr. Price's students may wonder, "When did he develop that sense of humor that is one of his outstanding characteristics?" This biographer cannot answer the question. Certainly, he had it when he was a college student. A speech that he delivered in February, 1904, was on the subject "My Ideal Hero." It began:

"Bill Nye says that many a time when his little brother would take a notion to go in swimming—which was strictly contrary to his mother's rules—and he was not able to prevent him from so doing, he would go in with him and thereby save him from a watery grave!"

His speech goes on to state, "My hero is the one who does that which will benefit humanity most.

"The greatest Kentuckian living or dead, the greatest peace-

maker the world has ever known, is the renowned Henry Clay. When he was asked why it was that he, being such a prominent man, would speak to the Negroes he met on the streets, he replied, 'I will not let a Negro outdo me in courtesy.'"

The schoolboy was father to the man.

Another school oration that has been preserved is dated 1903. It is entitled "Opportunities of the Country Boy." In it one finds both the humor and the philosophy of J. M. Price. This one began:

"An Irishman and his wife (his better 19/20) lived in their own home, happy as two little mice in a house of cheese. One day the wife missed her husband. She found him in the refrigerator. She asked him why he was in so unlikely a place. He answered, 'It is my decided intention to go to the Alaskan gold fields, and there is nothing like being prepared!'"

One realizes that he was trying his oratorical wings as he reads on:

I am sure there are just as good people in shoes as out of them! But we must remember that most great men were country boys who first learned to pull the bell cord over the back of the superannuated mule before they pulled the throttle of the locomotive; who learned to charge unflinchingly into the biggest, liveliest, and most revengeful set of bumblebees in the country before they made their daring run up San Juan Hill.

A country boy is not so likely to contract that awful disease of idleness as the city boy. A lazy man is no better than a dead man and takes up more room.

But, most of all, the lessons of economy learned in struggling to make a living give him his greatest education. "Poverty is uncomfortable, as I can testify," said James A. Garfield, "but nine times out of ten it is the best thing that can happen."

For the consolation of students who have had their papers severely red-penciled by Professor Price, it must be stated that one of his college papers had this note, written in red: "This has

some good in it. But on the whole it is conventional. It does not show as keen thought as your work does in general."

But the next paper examined contained this accolade:

"Exceedingly good, Sir! Simplicity and coherence stand out in this composition. Neatness is indeed with it. R. L. Templeton."

His brothers poked fun at his oratorical flights. Olis, who took time out for a business course, typed one of his orations, entitled "My Old Kentucky Home." It ended:

"We believe all states are noble but that ours is the noblest.

There is a spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.
Where shall that land, that spot of earth, be found?
Art thou a man? Look around
And thou shalt find, how'er thy footsteps roam,
That land thy country and that spot thy home!"

After this Olis typed in: "(Showers of eggs, and cries of 'Put him out')."

While in Bowling Green, young Price was a member of the Baraca Sunday school class at the First Baptist Church, the first of its kind in the state. This class was taught by Miss Cora Gaines. Here he learned to lead in public prayer. He also made his first public religious talk in the B.Y.P.U. of that church. He was highly esteemed by those older and younger than he. Author Alfred L. Crabb wrote an article for the school paper, *The Elevator*, ten years after his graduation, giving tribute to his friend Price. He told how Price had taken time to help him when he did not know how to help himself, when he was floundering desperately, trying to plan his course of study. A section of his tribute is reproduced here:

One day, in the library a senior came in and sat down by me. Not only that, but he spoke to me; he even went further and asked me about my work; and then he went the limit by taking pencil and

paper in hand, and working out for me a course of study that got somewhere. I followed the course as outlined, and two years later I was a senior myself.

Partly because of the helpful counsel J. M. Price gave me that day in *The Long Ago*, and wholly because he is altogether worthy of it—and more—is this article written.

Price was born in Marshall County, November 21, 1884. He was throughout his early years a perfectly normal specimen of rural childhood. He did not omit a single item from that long list of stunts put on and pulled off by bucolic youth. Nor did he include anything at which those of his kind fight shy. He merely proved himself a real Knight of the Red Head, of the Freckled Face, of the Snubbed Nose and the Stubbed Toes. He was a true son of the woods-way-back with so many of its virtues and so few of its vices that the woods-way-back couldn't keep him, so he taught a rural school or two and emerged therefrom headed in the general direction of the Normal School.

At the Normal, Price's work was characterized by sheer hard digging, and by the activities occasioned by his kindly nature. He never let a chance pass to speak a pleasant, helpful word, or to bestow a smile that brightened up things. He was an element of strength for the weak, and of good cheer for the discouraged.

Go West, Young Man

IT WAS AUGUST, 1905. Milburn Price was on the train journeying westward to make his home temporarily in Indian Territory. It hardly seemed possible. Only a month earlier he had graduated from Bowling Green, a confident twenty-year-old senior who felt that life was just a bowl of cherries. He had his education, he knew that the teacher's agency of his college would see that he got a position, and he had not a worry in the world.

How things had changed! Suddenly he had become a man, with a man's responsibilities, going out to take a man's place in a new and distant world. "I'm a bit like Daniel Boone," he chuckled to himself. "I'm blazing an unfamiliar trail. Or maybe I'm more like Abraham, going out not knowing whither I go."

He remembered how his carefully combed hair had almost stood on end when he was called into the office of the Teacher's Agency and informed that he had been selected to be high school principal at Marlow, Indian Territory, at the handsome salary of sixty dollars per month for an eight-month term of school. He was flattered, of course, but also dumfounded. The thought of leaving his native Kentucky had never once occurred to him. The state was very dear to the Price family. But even now he had left it miles behind.

It was a long way from Benton to Memphis, and from Memphis to Marlow, I.T.—750 miles, if he had figured accurately. He had time for long thoughts and major decisions.

For one thing, he would be Milburn Price no longer, but J. M. Price, instead. People in western Kentucky knew that he was named for Preacher Milburn, but to folks in the West that name would mean nothing. J. M. Price had a better ring to it for an educator, anyway.

The wheels of the train seemed to chant as they sped along. The tune they were singing was, "Principal of the HIGH School, Principal of the HIGH School." A big grin spread over his face. He wondered if anyone would ask what high school he graduated from. He'd have to tell them he had never even attended a high school, that they didn't have high schools in his part of the country.

He opened his traveling bag and got out the manual of Marlow Public School. He had almost worn it out trying to familiarize himself with the place that was to be his home. He turned to his picture and saw an earnest-looking young man with a high, high collar. "I hope the students don't find out my age," he thought. He hoped that the dignified-looking picture, with the words, "J. M. Price, B.S., Principal 7th and 8th grades" would cause them to think him a most mature gentleman. The words on the next page gave him confidence: "Much care and judgment has been exercised in the selection of our teachers, many applications having been considered in an effort to secure a teacher especially qualified for each grade." He would try to be worthy of this selection.

It was hot on the train. He pulled at his high collar and thought of cool Bear Creek back on the farm. He thought of his parents and of how much he owed them. He resolved that he would make good so that they could be proud of him. He remembered the courage with which they faced life's tragedies. How brave they had been when twenty-year-old Albert was stricken with spinal meningitis and numbered among the victims of the epidemic that swept the county, when he himself was only nine years old. He thought of his mother's anguished whisper, "My preacher boy," when she received the news of

Albert's death. He often had wondered if God would call him to preach, to take Albert's place.

His mind jumped to the terrible day when Olis' leg had been amputated. Olis had been helping in the wheat fields, had tried to leap from one side of the thresher to the other, and had fallen into the mouth of the thresher, which cut his leg off above the knee. The men working with him had improvised a stretcher and brought him to the house. His mother and father had not taken time for tears, although they had a stricken look about their eyes. They had gone to work to save Olis' life, while a neighbor sped away on horseback for the doctor, who was seven miles away.

His parents were courageous people. His was a noble heritage. He would not lower the family standards. In his years of teaching at the seminary he delighted to use an illustration about Dr. Walter Athearn. Young Walter stubbornly resisted the pressure of his fellow students to make him use tobacco. He said later when asked why he never yielded, "Looking back I could see clear down the line a string of Athearns that had never used tobacco." Like Athearn, Price felt "I would be true, for there are those who trust me."

Now the wheels of the train were doing a new chant. It went, "Go WEST, young man; go WEST, young man." Horace Greeley had made those words familiar by his famous editorials. Young Price had idealized Greeley, who was "born in poverty, cradled in obscurity, and early called from school to rugged labor." He had sought "to convert obstacles into opportunity, and wrest achievement from difficulty." Indeed, his life story read almost like a Horatio Alger novel, and Price liked to read those novels of achievement. "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country" sounded like sound advice.

The wheels of the train seemed to have changed their chant now, but he couldn't make out what they were saying. Had he listened closely he might have understood, "You'll find a wife, you'll find a wife," but looking for a wife was certainly not in

his plans for the immediate future. He was a young man with much to do, and he must do it in a hurry. He had no time for romance just then.

Again he looked at his manual and read: "Marlow is a beautiful little town of 2500 people, situated on the C.R.I. and P. Railroad. Its public school is second to none."

The description of the school sounded positively awe inspiring.

It is placed in the center of a large campus surrounded by beautiful Catalpas and maples, a large, two-story structure, commodious and conveniently arranged. The eight large recitation rooms, well lighted and ventilated, have a seating capacity of about 500, and are well supplied with the latest improved desks, maps, charts, and reference books, supplemented by a well selected library and laboratory.

"It might be just as well," he mused, "if I never mention the fact that my previous teaching has been in one-room schools."

Half a page was devoted to the matter of discipline. The discussion closed with these words:

It shall be the duty of teachers to practice such discipline in their classes as would be exercised by a kind and judicious parent in his family—always firm and vigilant, but prudent. They are to impress upon the minds of their pupils the principles of morality, virtue, honor and patriotism; a sacred regard for the truth, cleanliness, sobriety, temperance, industry and frugality.

He understood that the principal of a school was responsible for maintaining discipline in all the grades. Could he do it? If he did, it must be by the power of his personality and not by the strength of his brawn. He still weighed only 125 pounds. From his previous experience at Unity, he decided it would be wise to let the pupils know from the very first day that he would tolerate no foolishness. He would deal very firmly with any students who started out to run things. Oh, he would work hard

to become a successful teacher. He would live in the present, plan for the future, and remember the lessons of the past.

Marlow, when he arrived, seemed quite familiar, for the manual had described it rather well. He had wondered if he would feel at ease with the western people, but had felt reassured by the printed statement, "The fine sacred edifices with their organized bodies of Christians and united bands of Sunday School children, testify to the moral and religious zeal of the people." They sounded very much like his familiar Kentucky friends.

The very first day of school he was presented with a problem that almost stumped him. A boy who had failed in physical geography the year before asked for a make-up test. Young Price had no idea how to prepare questions for this test, for he had never had a course in physical geography. He told the boy to see him a bit later in the day. When recess time came, and the pupils filed out of the room, he wondered rather desperately what he was to do.

This dilemma was solved with typical Price ingenuity. He asked himself, "Where is the most logical place to look for the examination given last year?" In a flash he had the answer, "In the coal scuttle, of course!" A quick search proved he had guessed correctly. There in the bottom of the scuttle were the examination papers of the previous spring. From them he selected questions, gave the boy a test, and quickly passed him.

Young Price became active in the local church immediately. He taught in the Sunday school and worked in the B.Y.P.U. He also conducted daily Bible reading and prayer in his school-room. One parent, who was not a professing Christian, remarked that his religious influence and service were as valuable as his public school teaching.

In October a letter came saying that the Hardin Baptist Church back in Kentucky, following a procedure that was not too unusual in that era, had licensed him to preach without his knowing anything about it. The die was cast. The decision that

he had been struggling with was settled. His mother would have another preacher boy. He would take Albert's place.

The young high school principal was interested in every student in his room. He had never seen an Indian until he came West, and many of his pupils had Indian blood. The most baffling of his white students were the thirteen-year-old identical twins, Mabel and Maud Falk. Although he hated to admit it, he was unable to distinguish between them; so he always looked at his rollbook when he called on either of them. In this way he hoped to avoid looking at one of the twins while he called the name of the other.

The girls were puzzling in another way, too. They were conscientious students and very bright. They prepared their lessons well, but they missed school one day each week. They brought in the written assignments missed, but they never offered any explanation of their absence. Their father was secretary of the school board. It seemed that he would discipline them for playing hooky. Their older half sister was a faculty member of the Marlow school. It seemed that she would remonstrate with them.

November's bad weather set in. It rained without ceasing. Then one Friday morning about ten o'clock the sun that had been hidden for so long came bursting through the clouds. Mabel and Maud came to the front and stood before his desk. "We have to go home," Mabel said, asking his permission even as she let him know that it was absolutely necessary that they go. The girls had never asked permission to be absent before; they simply had failed to appear. This was beyond his understanding.

He thought quickly. This was his chance to unravel the mystery. He said slowly: "I'll let you go on two conditions. The first is that you will be back in time for the debate this afternoon. You have a part in it, you know." (One of them had a part. He was not sure which of the two it was.) Both pairs of blue eyes were grateful, both brown heads nodded quick agreement.

"The other condition," he continued, "is that you tell me why you miss a day of school each week."

An identical blush started up each neck and stained the identical faces before him. Identical heads shook slowly, and the whispered words came haltingly: "I'm sorry. We can't tell."

"But you must tell, or I can't let you go," came the quiet edict.

There was a pause, a battle of wills. But teachers had to be obeyed; so quietly, stumbingly, they told him. "There are eight children in our family. There were nine, but one died. Mamma has been married twice, you know. We have an older half brother and half sister. We are third in line. The others are younger. Mamma isn't very strong, and she can't do the washing for the family. Because we want to help, we volunteered for this responsibility. We came this morning because it was raining. But now the sun is out, and we must go home and wash."

"You may go," he said.

As the girls went out, he felt like saluting them. This was loyalty to be lauded. This was a family spirit that he appreciated. This was diligence that he admired. The admiration born that day later deepened into love. Eleven years later he and Mabel were married.

The weeks passed swiftly, bringing both problems and joys. Mother Price and brother Joe came to visit Marlow, to see how young Milburn was faring so far from home. It was a joy to see them but a problem to prevent his mother from treating him like a child. His pupils had been trying rather desperately to discover his age. One day as the Prices visited at the Falk home, young Milburn mentioned the coming elections. His mother spoke up quickly and positively, "You know you're not old enough to vote yet." What a humiliation! He felt almost as if he were standing on the platform again, being punished for his failure to spell correctly. There was a wicked gleam in the eyes of the Falk children, especially in the blue eyes belonging to the twins. So he *was* young. At least he was correcting this fault—he was getting older every day!

And while he was young, he would enjoy the sports that he loved so much. Instead of hunting squirrels, these folks hunted wolves. How exciting that should be! They hunted on horseback. On his first wolf hunt he rode a western saddle for four hours and was unable to sit down for a week.

Teachers' meetings were interesting experiences to the young schoolmaster. His school was a member of the Rock Island Teachers' Association, made up of schools along the Rock Island Railroad, from Chickasha to Comanche. It was a memorable day in Shawnee, Oklahoma, in December, 1906, when the Oklahoma and Indian Territory Teachers' Associations united. After all, statehood would be coming soon, and the schools could lead the way.

In March, 1907 he was asked to address the Teachers' Association. His subject was "The Aimless Teacher." It was a challenging assignment; but he would follow his usual pattern—get a chuckle from his audience, then hit hard. He began his address this way:

I shall imitate somewhat the preacher who took for his text, "the world, the flesh and the devil." Said he, "I will pass by the world, touch lightly on the flesh, and hasten on to the devil."

Someone has very well put it: The work of the teacher is to chisel out a man, to make of the diamond-in-the-rough the beautiful, polished, shining stone, to ring the rising bell in the dormitory of the soul. To educate the heart to feel, the mind to think, the body to act.

Teachers who were much older left that meeting with the conviction that though Price was still a young man, he had the makings of a real teacher.

At another teachers' meeting he spoke on the subject "My Troubles in School." He quoted several times a statement he had seen, "Never trouble trouble till trouble troubles you." Several years later at an all-day church meeting an elderly woman on crutches called him over to tell him how much that statement had meant to her through the years. He had forgotten all about

it, but as she lay on her bed as a cripple, the words had helped her. He felt happy and humbled.

The end of the first eight-month session came with amazing rapidity. Price was asked to return the next fall. Mabel and Maud were fourteen during his second year. Since their father was an official of the school board, it seemed logical that he should visit the family occasionally.

As the second school year drew to a close, the young school-master became deeply convinced that if he became the kind of teacher he'd like to be, he needed more training; that he must once again become a pupil to learn to be a teacher. Then, too, he had to learn to preach. He asked Mr. Falk before he left Marlow, "May I have permission to write to your daughters?" "Oh, yes," the old gentleman replied, "the girls will keep you well informed!" Armed with this promise, Price made his way back to Kentucky for the summer. The two years spent at Marlow had been profitable ones. He had paid off the school debt incurred during his college days and had saved two hundred dollars for further schooling. He had gained invaluable experience. He had come to two great decisions: he would preach, and he would seek further training. Perhaps most important of all, he had found friends who would enrich his entire life and the one who would later become his life companion.

Through Days of Preparation

WHEN TWENTY-TWO-YEAR-OLD J. M. Price set out for Baylor University in the fall of 1907, he already had a B.S. degree. Even so, his next eight years, save one, would be spent in two universities and the Southern Seminary, earning three more degrees in preparation for his lifework. Just what his particular work would be he still did not know. But he knew that his major concern would be in giving and serving, not in getting and being served.

Why did he choose Baylor? Not because of its size, although it was a large school with an enrolment of one thousand. Not because of illustrious alumni, although noted men and women had graduated in the sixty-two years of the school's history. He chose Baylor because B. H. Carroll was there—Carroll of the gigantic body and the tremendous mind and spirit. Carroll taught a four-year course in English Bible, and it was this fact that sent him to Baylor, for Carroll now had moved up to top place on his list of heroes.

Carroll was definitely a man worth patterning after. He had served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Waco for twenty-eight years and was called the conscience of Waco and of Texas. His name was a household word in the Baptist homes of the Southwest. He had written many books. He was a teacher of note, having taught theology and Bible in Baylor University since 1872, beginning before Price was even born. Only two

years before, in 1905, he had organized the Baylor Theological Seminary that functioned as a part of the University. Price intended to study at this seminary. Carroll was known far and wide as a fearless debater, one who delighted to match wits with the opponents of prohibition. He also debated preachers of other denominations on the subject of doctrines.

Young Price appreciated all the outstanding accomplishments of Dr. Carroll. But being a fledgling orator and debater himself, he was especially impressed with the way Dr. Carroll could combine humor and sarcasm to mow down an opponent. He could never forget the report of how Carroll answered a Methodist minister when they debated the subject of baptism. His opponent maintained that Jesus went into the Jordan River not to be immersed, but to be sprinkled. Carroll answered, "The man who followed a wagon from Edinburgh to London to see when the hind wheel would overtake the front was the personification of intelligence compared to one who would take a man into a river to sprinkle a little water on his head."

Price thought about Carroll and his great contribution to the world as he took the long train ride toward an unfamiliar section of the country. He had no way of knowing that this very fall things would change at Baylor, that the Baptist General Convention of Texas would authorize the separation of the seminary from Baylor and would give it a new name and a separate board of trustees. Being no seer, he did not know that in the summer of 1910 the seminary would move to Fort Worth, so that he would have only three years of study with the great B. H. Carroll.

Although he had planned, when he first decided to attend Baylor, to enrol in the School of Theology, interested friends urged him to take his B.A. work first. He wondered about the wisdom of this since he already had one Bachelor's degree, but finally he agreed, realizing that it saves time to get a good ready.

As the train took him farther and farther from home, he

thought how different this journey was from the train trip two years earlier. Then he had wanted to look older than his years, mature as a high school principal should look. Now he realized with a wry grin that he, a lowly freshman, would be older than many of the seniors. Of course, this was nothing to worry about. Were he the worrying kind, he could spend anxious moments puzzling over the problem of making the two hundred dollars he had saved at Marlow stretch to cover his year's expenses. But he did it! He became a genius at making the available money cover the necessary expenses. When he was back in Kentucky at the close of his first year in Baylor, he reported that his total expenses, including transportation to and from Kentucky, amounted to \$225.

It is only fair to say that there was an amazing difference in prices then and now. Ads in Baylor's student magazine published during his college days are most revealing.

The Vendome Theater publicized admission from 3:30 to 6 P.M. for five cents, because the movie was the sole attraction during those hours. At night an orchestra was added, and the admission was raised to ten cents.

The Behrens Drug Company advertised Mrs. McCormick's Beauty Cream that guaranteed a beautiful complexion. The ad said: "It was the first Greaseless Skin Food put on the market, and is now being imitated all over the country. It is a face cream and powder combined. The price for a large jar is 50¢."

The Scotch Woolen Mills advertised a suit or an overcoat, cut and made to order, for "\$15—no more, no less."

Knowing J. M. Price, one doubts if he spent the five cents on the movies or the fifteen dollars for a new suit, and it is obvious that he was no customer for beauty cream.

Soon after his arrival in Waco, letters came from Mabel and Maud Falk, wishing him well in his new role as a student and telling him how excited everyone was that in November Oklahoma would become a state, the forty-sixth state of the Union. They reported importantly that they had chosen their lifework

—Mabel would study music, while Maud would study art. Some months later Maud made a trip to Boulder, Colorado, and sent him a scenic post card. He was delighted. From this time on he answered Maud with cards. To Mabel he wrote his letters.

All too soon his freshman year was finished. Wonderful teachers had challenged him and awakened in him a new appreciation of scholarship. He felt that he had studied with the finest to be found in Waco—Dr. A. H. Newman, the historian; Dr. B. H. Dement, who would later become a professor at Southern Seminary; Dr. C. B. Williams, renowned Greek scholar; Dr. L. W. Doolan, teacher of Hebrew; and Dr. Calvin Goodspeed, theologian.

Just before he left Kentucky to return to Baylor for his sophomore year, the Hardin Church that had licensed him to preach three years earlier called for his ordination. Both of the services were led by Elder H. B. Taylor, a prominent figure in western Kentucky. Rev. J. H. Milburn, for whom he was named, returned to preach his ordination sermon.

How happy his parents were to see their twenty-three-year-old son ordained by the man who had led his mother to Christ! Of course, his mother's mind went back to Albert, her preacher boy who had died at twenty. She could see again the newspaper account that appeared a few weeks after his death, which began: "Albert Price was fast becoming prominent in the educational affairs of the country when stricken with spinal meningitis. He was numbered as one of the many victims of this plague that swept our country."

But surely she was blessed among women. Her oldest son, Norman, sat beside her. He had stayed on the farm with his parents. Her daughter, Mrs. Alex Fulton of Hardin, with her family helped to fill the pew. One of her lawyer sons, Joe, of Paducah, had come for the occasion. Olis, who practiced law in Oklahoma City, couldn't get there, but he had written he'd be thinking of them. Surely God had bestowed his crowning blessing when he called her baby boy to preach.

As J. M. Price journeyed to Waco to begin his sophomore year, he carried with him the ordination sermon that Rev. Milburn had written out in his spidery handwriting. He has kept it and treasured it through the years.

When he arrived, he was immediately advised to enrol in the class of evangelism, taught by Lee Rutland Scarborough. To this man belonged the distinction of being the first professor of evangelism in the history of theological education. He was a brilliant young man, a graduate of Baylor and of Yale University, with the Phi Beta Kappa award of honor. Although he had started out to be a lawyer, he had heard and answered God's call to preach. Evangelism was the first love of his life. Price enrolled in his class and found a friend for life as well as an inspiring teacher.

In the spring of 1910, his junior year, Price was called to his first pastorate at Eagle Springs Baptist Church. He preached here once a month. Texas old-timers realize that this was the home church of Pat Neff, who became governor of Texas and later president of Baylor University. At that time he was practicing law in Waco, but his cultured Virginia mother and his older brother Ben were members of Eagle Springs, regular attendants and the main financial support of the church. Dr. W. B. Bagby, pioneer missionary to Brazil, had once been a member here. How the people in that little rural church loved their young student pastor! He stayed with them as long as he was at Baylor.

In 1945, when he had spent thirty years as head of the School of Religious Education at Southwestern, Dr. Price received many letters of appreciation from outstanding educators. One of the most treasured came from the president of Baylor University. It said:

DEAR DR. PRICE:

I join in the tributes being paid you for your service to our denomination in the fields of education and religion.

I really prefer to think of you as pastor of the Eagle Springs

Baptist Church—the church which my mother helped to organize nearly 100 years ago, the church in which she worshiped for more than half a hundred years, the church where my father was converted late in life, and the church I joined in my early youth. I prefer, also, to think of you as you enjoyed the hospitality of my mother's roof. I prefer to think of you as I became acquainted with you largely through the fine things my mother said of you as a young man just starting out in your religious activities, practicing preaching on the primitive people of this fine community.

A considerable number of denominational and educational leaders received in part their training for life in and around Eagle Springs, now a "deserted village." Your footprints are still there, and your influence on the life of the community will be felt down through the years, because of your association long ago with the splendid people who made that community a good place in which to live. Until the final roundup,

Your friend,
PAT NEFF

In addition to becoming a pastor for the first time, another never-to-be-forgotten experience came to J. M. Price during his junior year. He represented Baylor and Texas in the central interstate prohibition oratorical contest. He had tried for this honor during his sophomore year, but had been defeated. With typical Price persistence he tried again his junior year, and this time he won.

The state intercollegiate contest followed the local eliminations, and he traveled to Decatur Baptist College to participate. There were nine college orators in this contest, but Price won over all of them. This meant that he would go to the central section of the United States to compete in May. This elimination was held at Oskaloosa, Iowa.

Baylor students sent Price to Iowa with many admonitions: "Now, don't get scared. Show 'em that old Baylor spirit." They cautioned him about being fearful so often that he remembered a story, which he has used in many a class, illustrating the power of suggestion.

A farmer driving into town to meet the train felt sure his

horse would be greatly afraid of it. He might even run away and tear up the buggy. He reached the station a bit early, unhitched the horse from the buggy, and tied it to a tree. He picked up the shafts to pull the buggy to the side of the road. Just then the train came thundering in, and *he* ran away with the buggy!

Price lost the contest in Iowa, but he knew in his heart that he had been a winner. He had won experience, poise, travel, and confidence. He had strengthened a conviction that has stayed with him through life—that liquor is one of man's greatest enemies.

He chuckled to himself, remembering an oration he had made during his first year at Bowling Green, a flowery tribute to the glories of Kentucky. It had started: "Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, Pedagogues and Pedagoguesses, if you have naps to take, prepare to take them now." Then he had launched forth on the marvels of his native state. Quoth he:

The gallant Kentucky youth, on Sunday eve, can mount his thoroughbred Pegasus and ride with the swiftness of the swallow to the home of the fairest maid that lives. The infirm old man can fill his pipe with home-grown Burley and smoke peace to the world. A criminal may land on our shores from the longest river in the world, and, if he commit a foul crime, be hanged with the finest fibered hemp that grows. The despondent one can drink from our Bourbon fount and drown his saddest sorrows with draughts as sweet as the nectar of Jupiter.

It was a good thing the people who praised him so highly for his speech on prohibition had not known that he once had been so carried away with pride in Kentucky that he had praised even her liquor!

When he returned to Baylor, a letter from his mother awaited him. She inclosed a recent newspaper article written in preparation for the golden anniversary of the organization of Company G, Third Kentucky Infantry, Confederate States of America. The article stated:

From the formation of this company to the close of the war, 174 men were enrolled. For valor, integrity and honorable citizenship the pages of history do not mention their superiors. Their first baptism of fire was at Shiloh. Seven captains, thirteen lieutenants, and 72 privates were killed and wounded the first day.

They went through four years of the fiercest conflict that history records. They need not be ashamed of their surrender to overwhelming odds in that war.

Their reward is an inflexible integrity to principle, indomitable courage and untarnished heroism.

Price had only to close his eyes to become again a small boy, listening at his father's knee to tales of the war. He had to smile at his mother's letter. She intimated that he had shown as great courage in facing his opponents in the oratorical contests as his father had displayed in battle.

In the fall of 1910 Price was called to the pastorate of a half-time church, Bosqueville Baptist. This, along with his Sunday at Eagle Springs, gave him preaching appointments for three Sundays in the month. A humorous event took place soon after he became pastor at Bosqueville. One Sunday morning he had just started delivering what he felt was a most interesting sermon. Evidently, one member of his congregation did not agree. The small daughter of the Sunday school superintendent slipped from the bench beside her mother, tiptoed to the back of the church where the men left their hats, got her father's hat in one hand and the preacher's hat in the other. Before anyone realized what she was doing, she handed her father his hat and started toward the pulpit to give the preacher his. As she walked down the aisle, she put the hat on her own head. The congregation was convulsed with laughter. The young preacher accepted his hat, joined in the laughter, then proceeded with his sermon.

There were wonderful experiences at Bosqueville. The power of united prayer was demonstrated. The revival was going on. The church had become greatly concerned about the husband of the church pianist. They met to have special prayer for him.

He was riding on his cultivator in the field. Even as he rode, he was converted. After this there was a real revival.

A visit to Marlow highlighted the summer between his junior and senior years. Mabel told him that she planned to go to the University of Chicago to study music. He urged her to choose Baylor instead. It would be nearer her home, and she could get work to help with her expenses. So as a senior he escorted a freshman girl to the school soirees, to the dismay of the senior girls, who felt they should have been chosen.

His senior year was packed full of adventure and zest for living. He was president of the Erisophian literary society, thereby gaining valuable experience in parliamentary law procedures. The intersociety debate was the big contest of the year. He was one of the two to represent his society, and the judges' decision was for the Erisophians. What a triumph that he had led his team to victory, especially since that was the only one of the four contests his society won that year.

Excitement was still in the air over the outcome of the debate when the faculty announced that he had been awarded the coveted Marston scholarship to Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, for a year of graduate study. This award was two hundred dollars. Could he afford to accept it? It would mean another year of financial strain, of never having quite enough money to do the things he'd like to do. But it would mean studying in New England, a section of the country that was a closed book to him. It would mean more thorough preparation for the work God called him to do. He accepted.

Baylor days had meant much to him. He had been a member of the first class in experimental psychology taught there. He had studied Browning under Dr. A. J. Armstrong. He had become pastor of two small churches.

In 1945, her centennial year, Baylor showed her appreciation for this outstanding alumnus by honoring him with the LL.D. degree. He made his contribution to the occasion by editing a splendid book of biographies entitled *Ten Men from Baylor*.

This Is My Task

TRAINS HAVE ALWAYS fascinated J. M. Price. He loves to study train schedules and connections. His nephew said of him: "Had he not chosen the field of religious education, I'm sure he would have wound up as president of some railroad company. And he would have made a good one! He's always figuring how trains could improve their service. Because of his intense interest in the railroads, and in the people he meets as he travels, he alights from a long train trip fresh as a daisy, while his fellow travelers are weary and worn."

It was a long trip from western Kentucky to Providence, Rhode Island, but it was exciting to think that he would visit Washington, Philadelphia, and New York en route and that his journey would end at the city where the first Baptist church in America was organized. Thinking of Baptist history reminded him of a sentence he had seen in a history of English Baptists. The author had pointed out the decline of Baptists there and had remarked dolefully that prosperity had slain more than the sword. He chuckled to himself. He might face many distracting circumstances during his year at Brown, but prosperity would not be one of them! He would be forced to continue his familiar routine of strictest economy.

Fortune smiled on him in that he was chosen to be grader in the psychology department of the university. That helped with expenses. Also, he was called as pastor of a mission church

at Manton. He spoke each Sunday morning and evening and on Wednesday evening and was paid seven dollars a week. He rented a third-story attic room in the registrar's home. As he lay in his bed, he could touch the ceiling with his feet. This brought memories of his childhood days when he had lain in his bed in Kentucky and dreamed of being a pioneer.

Price had anticipated his year in Providence. The city had been founded by one of his pioneer heroes, Roger Williams. He could not express it so eloquently as did a modern writer, but in his mind he knew that Providence was intended to be "a city of refuge for all dissenters, a city with gates wide open to all who searched for God and truth and who found Puritanism too small a house for their souls to live in."² He knew that it was the first city of its kind in the New World and Brown the first Baptist college in the United States.

In the New England environment Price was led to re-examine his faith. It held firm. He knew whom he believed and why. His determination to live a life of steadfastness led him to write out the way he would take. He wrote:

RESOLUTION

I will not yield.

Though all the base desires of sinful flesh

Surge up within me with relentless power

And every trusted friend of mine around

Bend to the lower standards of the hour,

I will not yield.

I'll not give up.

Though every fond ambition of my heart

And every task to which my hands are set

Fall crushed and broken at my very feet

And all the past be turned to sad regret,

I'll not give up.

² Frank S. Mead, *The Ten Decisive Battles of Christianity* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1937), p. 103.

I'll fight to win.
With confidence serene in God and right
And with my heart and life secure in Him
I'll master every problem that assails
And conquer every foe without, within.
I'll fight to win.

J. M. P.

It was during this time he began to sense vaguely what his lifework would be. He wanted to popularize Bible study among the masses. He wanted farmers and small wage earners, housewives, and factory workers to know whom they believed and why. He wanted to train laymen and laywomen to become Sunday school teachers.

He received his M.A. from Brown, then enrolled for an eight-weeks summer course in the Curry School of Expression in Boston. Here he learned to speak with his throat relaxed. Did he have a premonition even then of how many lectures he would give in the years to follow?

Author Crabb, whose tribute to Price was quoted in part in an earlier chapter, described the year spent by Price in New England as follows:

I don't think Price was as happy at Brown, as he had been at Baylor and at Bowling Green. At both of those places there had been a lot of genuinely human matters which rendered the courses of study more palatable. At Brown there was no matter of any kind. Nothing but mind; and it in a refrigerated state. But Price put on his mental ear muffs, adjusted his intellectual foot warmers and chiseled a M.A. degree out of that glacier of gray matter. During the summer of 1912 he was a student in the Curry School of Oratory, Boston, Mass. We have no direct data concerning the character of the work he did while there, but it is believed that he courageously resisted the united efforts of the faculty to force him to gargle his r's, and to mispronounce the English language of Kentucky.

I think I have neglected to inform you that Price is a preacher; a Baptist minister of the short-haired, long-headed type; a perfectly human man with a divine calling; one who holds that his mission on earth is to do good, and not merely look it.

Crabb's tribute continues:

"Price shook the icicles of New England from his mantle and went home to work with the Baptist Sunday Schools of Western Kentucky."

How good it was at the end of the summer to go back to his own state and his own people! He had seen other sections of the country now, and he was convinced that this place, so dear to his heart, deserved whatever service he was able to render. In October, 1912, he was elected Sunday school evangelist for Blood River Association, his home association, with its forty-three churches. Only two of the forty-three churches were full time. These two churches were located in the county seat towns of Benton and Murray. This job was noteworthy in that it was the first full-time associational Sunday school work done in the South.

As a pioneer in full-time associational Sunday school work, his first problem was how to organize for effective work. He had no transportation of his own and would have to depend on the train or catch rides with others. He would have to plan carefully. He decided that during the heaviest part of the farming season he would be at a church only on weekends. Ordinarily, he would spend a week in a church, teaching the *Convention Normal Manual* about three hours a day for five days. At the end of the week he would reorganize the Sunday school, grade it, lead the church to put up curtains and to equip the school with blackboards, maps, and other teaching aids. During his eleven months as associational Sunday school worker he taught the *Convention Normal Manual* twenty-four times. This laid a foundation for the work to be done.

He put long hours and earnest endeavor into this effort to improve Sunday school work in Blood River Association. During the first five months he was within thirty miles of his father's home all the time, but got home for only one noonday meal, one night, and for the Christmas holidays. He describes those days by saying:

I visited forty-one of the forty-three churches in the association during the eleven months. Stayed usually in a different home each night while conducting schools. Slept, or tried to sleep, in over two hundred beds during the year, some of them inhabited. I know what the Scripture means when it speaks of "creeping things." I had little chance to be by myself, for even as the farmers went out to feed the stock and milk the cow, they would leave one of the children to stay with me to keep me company. I had more fried chicken, pies, and cakes that year than any four others of my life.

One pastor evidently did not want me at his church, for when I got off the train at the town where he lived, he had already driven out to his country church, instead of waiting for me as had been agreed. I waited for the next train, rode as near to his church as I could get and caught rides, part of the way by horseback and part of the way in a wagon. The next morning I was sitting on a stump in front of the church when the pastor drove up. He was one surprised man, for he thought he had evaded me. No wonder he didn't want me in his church, for I discovered that he didn't even attend Sunday school. He whittled and talked to the men in the churchyard while the women and children conducted Sunday school inside. That morning the Sunday school offering was twenty-six cents. I had given twenty-five cents of it. I remembered the old joke, "If you had put more in, you would have got more out."

As I look back on that time, though, I believe it was the most fruitful single year of my life. At the close of the year we had six standard Sunday schools, four of them in the open country. For the preceding five years the average number of baptisms in the association had been 250. The next year we reported 555 baptisms. We were reaching people for the Lord and for Bible study. Salary? I received sixty dollars a month for my regular work, which was the same salary I'd made seven years earlier teaching school at Marlow. I got ten dollars a month extra for supplying a quarter-time church at Birmingham, Kentucky. In my day you didn't expect much remuneration if you went into religious work.

Again, however, there came the recurring realization that he needed more preparation. A person doing the Lord's work should be an unashamed workman. In the fall of 1913 he entered Southern Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky. E. Y. Mullins, the president, had written that the seminary had "grown to be

perhaps the largest protestant Seminary in the world with its almost 300 students."

Again there was a reversal of role. The year preceding, Price had been an earnest, hard-working associational Sunday school missionary, the first in the South. Now he was no less in earnest, no less hard working, but he was a student again, in the atmosphere of practical jokes and shared nonsense.

New York Hall, the dormitory that housed the young ministerial students, did not smother them with luxury. Inman Johnson described his room as follows:

It was not inviting. The floor was splintery, the walls dirty, a single forty-watt clear light bulb hung from the ceiling; and the room was furnished with a small ancient table covered with carvings of Greek and Hebrew words, a decrepit washstand with a cracked china bowl and pitcher, one straight chair, and an iron bed with sagging springs and a faded mattress. . . . It was hardly reasonable for us to expect much in the way of equipment or food; for the sum total of eleven dollars we received board, room, heat, light, and water.³

That describes Price's living conditions. What was his social life like during his years at Louisville? He described two receptions given by Walnut Street and Broadway Baptist Churches: "They came like a breezy shade and pleasant visitor and cool drink to a weary plowman in a stumpy new ground."

The entertainment at the parties might seem insipid to young moderns. Price wrote: "Last of all was a smiling contest, the boys lining up, filing by and smiling at three beautiful young ladies. W. B. Miller won the cake, due to his physical advantage in that regard and to his extensive experience."

In a column he wrote for the *Western Recorder*, the state Baptist paper, Price said: "On Saturday afternoon, the students paid their usual weekly visit to the Ten Cent Stores and other places of amusement."

There was adventure in daily living. Price wrote again:

³ Inman Johnson, *Of Parsons and Profs* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959), pp. 8-9.

Not all the heroes are dead. There is one more, anyway. And S. D. Poe is that man. It all happened one night last week just before midnight when a knight of the road gently turned the door knob at Poe's room. Poe turned in his bed. The intruder fled. Poe clad "a la" night shirt, pursued. He overtook him in the reception room. Standing in the door way in his undress uniform, he commanded him in the name of New York Hall and the laundry room to surrender. He surrendered. The culprit got ten dollars and cost. Poe got the praise of all New York Hall. And the next day a strange bull dog wandered into New York Hall, and forthwith attached himself to Poe. Verily, valor hath its rewards.

But all the previous considerations paled into insignificance beside his studies. Price honestly feels that no seminary in America ever had so great a group of teachers at one time as Southern Seminary had during this era. He had the privilege of studying under E. Y. Mullins, John R. Sampey, A. T. Robertson, W. J. McGlothlin, W. O. Carver, B. H. DeMent, and others.

Studying with these mental and spiritual giants was a continuous feast. And again he was called to be pastor, this time at a good, substantial village church. He preached half time at Corydon Baptist Church near Henderson, Kentucky. "Happy" Chandler, who would later become governor and United States senator, was a newsboy there at that time.

When summer came, he did Sunday school field work in the eastern third of Kentucky—the Bluegrass and mountain sections. The famous feuding section of the state was in his territory. He had one engagement at Harlan, where the bullet holes from the feudists still showed in the courthouse. He visited the annual associational meetings representing the state Sunday School Department. One such visit necessitated his riding a mule twelve miles over the mountains. "This visit," he chuckled, "may not have left a lasting impression on the folks, but it certainly left a lasting impression on *me*." Every night he was entertained in a different home and had to stay up late talking. Every day he would sit for hours in some church meeting. It was during these weeks that he developed two habits that he

has kept for a lifetime. The first was to drink lots of buttermilk instead of eating rich foods. The second was to relax any time anywhere. He describes this in his latest book *Mastering Life's Problems*. He says: "Years ago while in field work, continually on the go, and in meetings all day, the writer learned to sit in an audience with his elbows on his knees, his face in his hands, and relax to the tips of his fingers and toes while awaiting his turn to speak. It was worth more than a cup of coffee or a glass of tea. And the folks around thought he was praying!"⁴

Price had been given a year's seminary credit for the work he had done in Waco under Dr. Carroll and the seminary professors there. So his second year at Louisville would be his last in earning his Th.M. degree.

During his last year at the seminary he served as acting state Sunday school secretary. Every day after classes he went to the state Sunday school office, dictated letters, and sent out literature. Two Sundays a month he preached at Corydon. The other Sundays were spent visiting various sections of the state to promote Sunday school work. His most unforgettable trip was into Rowan County, made famous by Cora Wilson Stewart's "moonlight schools"—night classes for illiterate adults. He was paid twenty-five dollars a month for serving as acting state Sunday school secretary.

Another interesting assignment was reporting seminary news each week for the *Western Recorder*, the state Baptist paper. His first column, in the October 7, 1914, issue, tells of the opening of the school year. Part of it is given here:

The formal opening was Wednesday morning, September 30th. President Mullins read II Tim. 2:1-15, setting forth the ideal of the seminary. "The Seminary's Key-note," he said, "is spirituality and work. The need of the preacher is self-sacrifice and self-development, not altogether the one or the other, but a combination, and balancing of the two." "A sinking man," he said, "wants an expert

⁴ J. M. Price, *Mastering Life's Problems* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1958), p. 99.

swimmer coming to his rescue, not merely one willing to sacrifice himself."

The report of registration gave 215 men and 36 women, and others have come in since.

Owing to war conditions in Europe, Dr. McGlothlin's leave of absence was cut short and he is back with us to take up his work at the beginning of the session—not because it was too hot for him over there, he stoutly affirms, but because of the green pastures over here.

Dr. Robertson's *Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* is out. It is a massive volume of 1,360 pages, the product of nearly a quarter of a century of tireless labor, and marks him as the foremost New Testament Greek scholar in the world today.

"But I'm mar-r-r-ied now," is the song many of the last year's boys are singing. Bailes has joined the benedicts; Gaines is leading about a wife; Blanchard has gone and got married; Garwood has a better half; Baker has quit single blessedness; Cagle has a pastor's assistant; Yoakley headed off her retreat to Virginia, and time would fail me to tell of Bryan, Watson, Stout, White, Langston, Carmichael, Davis, Gardner, who also got married. Meanwhile, Green and I walk the lonesome path of life single file.

He was still single, but his letters from Mabel were meaning more and more to him. It was taking Mabel a long time to finish her college work, for she went to college a year, then taught a year, went back to college again, and then once more to the classroom.

In November the message came that his number one hero, Dr. B. H. Carroll, had died. P. E. Burroughs wrote: "On November 11, the chariot of God paused at his door on Seminary Hill, and he went to be with God. When the wires spread the news that he was gone from us, my soul bowed in grief, and I cried, 'My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!'"

Another message told how Carroll had summoned Lee R. Scarborough shortly before his death and said to him, "Lee, lash the seminary to the heart of the Saviour."

Carroll's death meant that the young seminary would have to seek a new president. Surely Carroll's mantle would fall on Scarborough.

But life in Kentucky held too many challenges and problems for him to spend much time thinking of Texas. One of his visits on Sunday was described in his column for the *Western Recorder*.

It was a pleasure and an experience to visit Bethel Sunday. The church is in the slum section with the City Hall in front and the Red Light district to the rear. The building itself was once "Bierod's Saloon and Theater" and remains substantially the same. But the work is different. Where once the bar stood, now M. S. Blair teaches the Bible to the men; in the main room where tables for drinking once were, now six classes of boys and girls are taught the Bible; on the stage where once the denizen of the underworld danced to fire the passions of men, now five talented and consecrated young ladies teach the children the way of life; and in the gallery where gambling rooms were, now are the pastor's office, store room, cooking room and long lines of tables to feed the hungry. By a strange coincidence the brother of the former proprietor of the saloon is being fed from that table.

Sunday School was at 9:45, and it was an inspiring sight to see the sympathetic touch and wholesome uplift of these students upon the lives of the unkempt but needy children—and all without remuneration save the reward of faithful service.

At one o'clock the feeding of "the multitude" began with more students coming in to volunteer their services to wait on tables. Long lines of wan, pale men, women and children filed in to get their only "daily bread"—some so exhausted they could hardly go, three during the past days having fainted from sheer hunger—until around a thousand had poured through. B. Y. P. U. and preaching at night conducted by the pastor and student helpers, closed the day.

Time flew by on wings. Almost before he could realize it, the end of school was upon him. It was in a sentimental mood that he prepared his last column for the *Western Recorder*.

Graduation time was approaching. Soon he would have his Th.M. degree and go out to begin his lifework. His thesis was

typed and ready. The subject was, "Give the Word a Chance." More and more Price felt that the Bible must be taught to the masses. And he must help people to know how to do this. But how should he help?

The last few weeks of school were disconcerting days; he was in an agony of indecision. He had spent thirty years preparing, but for what? Three alternatives faced him. Kentucky Baptists had elected him full-time state Sunday school secretary. He longed to accept this offer. Kentucky was the state he loved best of all. He had come to know and appreciate her leaders. In this position he could promote Bible study among the masses.

Then there was the appeal from a college classmate and the Foreign Mission Board to go to Canton, China, to teach in the Baptist seminary there. What a challenge! Here he could teach Chinese leaders how to present God's word to their people.

The third call was from the infant seminary in Fort Worth, whose history he had followed with such keen interest. He was asked to come and start a school of religious education there. Dr. L. R. Scarborough, the brand new president of Southwestern, wrote: "It is now our purpose to establish a School of Christian Pedagogy. I think we have hold of the small end of a big proposition. We will have to do pioneer work and break new ground." He asked J. M. Price to "come by way of the throne of God" and organize the school.

Price was a praying man, and he knew that only through prayer could he know God's will for his life. He prayed, and he found the answer. God wanted him at Southwestern Seminary. The wonderful thing was that in accepting this call he could be in Texas, Kentucky, and China at the same time, through the students he would train and send out. Reverently he bowed his head: "Thank you, Lord, for showing me where I should serve. This is my task."

Pioneer Days

THE TRIP FROM KENTUCKY to Fort Worth was made via Oklahoma City, ostensibly to visit his brother, Judge Olis Price. The real magnet was the knowledge that Mabel was visiting her brother in the same city. To casual observers and, indeed, to their families, the relationship between the two was still that of a helpful teacher and an admiring pupil. A few were beginning to wonder at the sustained interest of the teacher. Mabel's brother remarked, "Isn't it a coincidence that you should both be visiting in the city at the same time!" His wife echoed thoughtfully, "You know, I don't believe it is simply coincidence."

Mabel had been teaching music in Tulsa, but planned to return to Baylor in the fall. She was twenty-three years old, and Price was thirty. She felt that it was time for him to declare his intentions. But Price felt he should not ask Mabel to marry him until he was reasonably sure he could provide for her. Mabel confessed in after years that she often was tempted to say something that would speed up this romance that was progressing so slowly. She wrote many letters that she never mailed. Always she would remind herself, "He is the older, he has been my teacher, he should make all the advances."

From Oklahoma City Price journeyed to San Francisco, where the great Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915 was being held, celebrating the opening of the Panama



Dr. J. M. Price



The J. M. Price family in May, 1956: seated, Mrs. Mabel Falk Price and Dr. Price; standing, James O. Price, Joseph W. Price, Mrs. Elizabeth Price Hobday, and John M. Price, Jr.

Canal. His round-trip ticket from Benton, Kentucky, cost sixty-three dollars and allowed for stopovers. He saw San Diego, Yosemite, Pikes Peak, Yellowstone Park, and Grand Canyon. What a thrill it was to see the wonders of the West! Also, he was pleased at his prowess in walking up Pikes Peak, making the nine miles in seven hours.

As he made the train trip back to Texas, he had time for long thoughts. The world was in a state of confusion and chaos. All Europe was at war. Only three months earlier the *Lusitania* had been torpedoed, with the loss of 1,198 lives, 124 of whom were Americans. Some people were predicting that the United States would be drawn into this war eventually. But there was little he could do about that situation. His thoughts came back to himself and his new venture. He delved into his satchel for letters he had received about coming to Fort Worth. On top of them was a clipping from the June 9 issue of the *Benton Baptist*, a paper published in his county site in Kentucky, telling of his decision to go to Fort Worth. It listed his achievements from the time he was secretary of a little country Sunday school at the age of twelve. The article ended:

We are indeed sorry to have Bro. Price leave the state. Kentucky offered him strong inducements to stay, but for some years he has heard a call to go West, where he will instruct the young ministers of the South. His influence will go out to the ends of the earth. He is the proud but modest possessor of degrees amounting to nine letters—B.S., B.A., M.A., Th.M.

No state can give a more valuable gift than Kentucky gives to Texas—one of her most noble sons.

Price smiled at this flowery tribute, remembering that the editor had asked him privately what kind of grades he had made at Louisville. He had answered: "Oh, they were not too spectacular, but I got by. I was invited to stay and do my Th.D. work, but thought I'd better get some experience first. I feel that a dog without a tail is better than a tail without a dog!"

He turned to some of the letters he had received. One from Dr. L. R. Scarborough, dated March 12, 1915, said:

You already know something of our Seminary. You are more or less familiar with its faculty, with its ideals, standards, life and ambition. You know its environment. You know its great, aggressive, orthodox, evangelistic and missionary constituency. You know that Dr. Carroll laid deep and well its foundations for a great superstructure of spiritual power.

. . . We will have to do pioneer work and break new ground. As I understand it, this school of pedagogy will be a rare thing in this country, the only one in the South and even beyond the South. The Sunday School Board men are very enthusiastic about this movement and believe that it is one of the most distinctive and far-reaching kingdom matters started within many years.

Your salary will be \$2,000 for the full year's work, plus your necessary traveling expenses in connection with your field work.

We feel that this is an opportunity for you to invest your life in what is to be one of God's greatest spiritual centers, and one of the kingdom's most far-reaching movements.

Price put aside his correspondence and gave himself to wondering about the campus, the student body, and the faculty of this seminary to which he was headed. It was not a Southern Baptist seminary, such as the one from which he had graduated. It was owned and controlled by Texas Baptists.

He knew something about the campus, although he had never seen it. It was during his senior year at Baylor that the seminary had moved to its new location, and he had heard much talk about it. He knew that it consisted of fifty acres, located about two miles south of the city of Fort Worth, and was known as Seminary Hill. He had heard that the campus was the highest spot for miles around, that its elevation was on a level with the top of the courthouse in the city, which, according to Dr. Gambrell, indicated that the gospel is above the law. However, he felt sure that Seminary Hill would not compare to his hills in Kentucky.

He remembered hearing that the contractor had promised

that the one building on the campus, Fort Worth Hall, would be completed for the opening of school that first fall of 1910. Unavoidable complications had delayed its completion, and when the session opened, only the first floor was ready for use. The second floor was completed during that year, and for the first four years on Seminary Hill those two floors had housed administration, library, classrooms, dormitory, and chapel.

Until the fall of 1914 the young ladies had roomed in the east wing of Fort Worth Hall, the single men in the west wing, and the married students in the central hall. But at long last the third floor had been made ready and the single men promoted upstairs. He turned to the catalog and read: "All unmarried students and married students without children will be expected to board in Fort Worth Hall. The cost of furnished room, lights, heat and bath will be \$16 per month, payable in advance."

But now a new day had dawned! This fall there would be a second building on the campus—a building to house the Woman's Missionary Training School. He had considered living in Fort Worth Hall, but had decided to room and board in the home of Professor J. W. Crowder, whom he had known at Baylor. He smiled as he remembered a letter from his friend W. T. Conner concerning living arrangements. He had written: "We are saving one or two good rooms for you in Fort Worth Hall. Either of them will be a palace as compared to your room in New York Hall."

From here his thoughts went to the student body. It was a large one for so young a school—187 men and women last year, with hopes for an increase this fall. Optimistic as he was, he did not even envision vaguely that he would see the student body grow to around twenty-five hundred students and the seminary become known as the largest in the world.

But the faculty! This was where his mind lingered longest. The eight professors of last year would be back. He would make the ninth faculty member, and rumor had it that a tenth man

would begin teaching church music. Dr. Scarborough had written concerning the faculty, "We want the best, and mean, as far as possible, to make ourselves the best in all the lines of scholarship."

He saw these men for himself a few days later at the first faculty meeting. He had no way of knowing that six of them would labor with him decade after decade on that campus. The meeting room contained a wonderful portrait of Dr. B. H. Carroll, founder and first president. Price remembered a tribute he had heard: "Carroll conceived the Seminary in his heart, saw it in vision, prayed and worked it into reality, financed it for years, and gave to it his great brain, good heart, and his best energies, and left it as an enduring monument to his love, faith, prayers and labors."

The new president, forty-five-year-old Lee Scarborough, of the penetrating eyes and the flaming heart, presided at the meeting. This Texas cowhand turned preacher, the first professor of evangelism in the history of theological education, would now combine the teaching of evangelism with his administrative duties as president.

Forty-six-year-old C. B. Williams, professor of Greek New Testament, was dean of the seminary. He was a North Carolinian, educated at Wake Forest, Crozer, and the University of Chicago, the first outsider brought in to teach at the seminary, back in its Waco days. In four years he would resign to become president of Howard College.

The lanky frame of Arkansas-born W. T. Conner was draped over a chair. He was a teacher of theology and even at thirty-eight showed promise of becoming a most outstanding theologian. His characteristic wit was woven into his every utterance.

Forty-nine-year-old Charles T. Ball, also a North Carolinian, headed the department of Comparative Religion and Missions. In five years he would leave the seminary to go to the American Baptist Convention, first to head its student work, then to

found and become the first president of Eastern Seminary in Philadelphia.

A bit older than the others was princely Jeff D. Ray. He had held the chair of Homiletics and Pastoral Duties at the seminary since 1907, the year the seminary was chartered. He had no air of importance and seemed unaware that many Texas Baptists regarded him with awe and adoration. He felt that the prestige of being fifty-five, the oldest man on the faculty, made him the unofficial custodian of the manners of the campus. Woe to any young man who dared to enter the dining room in his shirt sleeves! Dr. Ray would tap him on the shoulder and suggest that both the young man and the others would feel more comfortable if he went back to his room and put on his coat.

W. W. Barnes was thirty-two, two years older than Price. He had come to Fort Worth two years earlier to accept the professorship of Church History. He had taught some classes in religious pedagogy during these two years. This caused Price to feel especially close to him.

Twenty-nine-year-old J. B. Weatherspoon was the only one of the group younger than Price, and he was his junior by only one year. He was professor of Homiletics and Christian Sociology.

J. W. Crowder, forty-two years of age, was a Tennessean who had come to Baylor for his education. He came with the seminary from Waco to Fort Worth and was professor of English Bible.

The new professor, I. E. Reynolds, was thirty-six. He was from Alabama, and he had come from his work as evangelistic singer with the Home Mission Board to head a new department, the Department of Gospel Music. He was the only one of the group with no degree beside his name, but he had had wonderful and varied experiences as an evangelistic singer.

There they were, nine besides himself—men with whom he would labor and learn, men with whom he would agonize and

rejoice, men whom he would respect and help, men who would help him.

Several days later Price met the other "freshman" professor on the campus. Reynolds reported jubilantly that nine students had enrolled to study with him.

Price's report was not so encouraging. Only one regular student, George A. Miller, had enrolled in his department. One other had enrolled also. So the Department of Religious Education was off to a not-too-auspicious beginning, with one teacher and two students! Was it for this he had spent thirty years in preparation? He comforted himself with his knowledge of the history of Southern Seminary. He remembered that when that seminary had reopened after Civil War days there were only seven students. In homiletics Dr. Broadus had only one student, and he was blind. But Dr. Broadus gave this one blind student the best that he had. The careful preparation of full lectures for the blind brother led to his writing *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. And who could tell? He, J. M. Price, might write a book himself someday!

His first weeks at Fort Worth were lonely, frustrating days. He was the only unmarried man on the faculty. The other professors had their families to go home to. He had only his one empty room. The other faculty members referred to him constantly as "our bachelor professor." It became more and more of an effort to summon a smile at this title, usually bestowed when he was introduced to a young lady.

Price's office was on the second floor of Fort Worth Hall. From his window he had a wonderful view of the city. He could see the trains coming and going. Especially at night he grew a bit wistful as he watched those trains. Some of them would go to Kentucky where his parents were. Some would go to Waco, where Mabel was in school. How he would like to be on them, especially on the train going South!

But his frustration stemmed more from uncertainty than from loneliness. How should he go about laying a foundation

for a school of religious education? There was very little for him to pattern after. Southern Seminary had a course in Sunday school pedagogy, but it was aimed at training pastors rather than vocational workers. He had taken this course under Dr. B. H. DeMent, and he knew he wanted his school to offer a far broader study than that which was given at Louisville. He wanted to train laymen, not just preachers.

Dr. Scarborough's letter to him had said, "This school of pedagogy will be a rare thing—the only one in the South, and even beyond the South." There was only one school of religious pedagogy in the nation, and that was the one located at Hartford, Connecticut. Its aim was the training of professional leadership in religious education. But there were things about it that he did not like.

In the first place, the Hartford school had no definite denominational alignment. Price wanted his school to train Baptist young people to work in Baptist churches. The Hartford school was primarily for young women, since the custom of employing women as directors of religious education prevailed in northern churches. Price felt that many young men would be needed as educational directors in southern churches. Then the Hartford school offered the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Pedagogy. Price much preferred the term "Religious Education."

So how should he start? Which steps should be taken first? These questions he faced day and night, week in and week out.

In 1915 only four Southern Baptist churches had educational workers. These favored ones were First Baptist Church, Fort Worth; First Baptist Church, Dallas; Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville; and Tabernacle Baptist Church, Atlanta. The workers in these churches were more nearly assistant pastors than educational directors. (This scarcity of workers can be conceived only dimly by moderns of this day who realize that there are more than fifteen hundred educational workers in the Convention.) Price was definitely convinced that more

and more churches would need educational directors, and he was positive that they needed to be as well trained for their task as preachers were for theirs.

But these discouraging facts loomed before him: There were no young men and women wanting to go into the work of directing the educational program of a church. They knew nothing about such work. And had there been those who were ready to train for this service, there were practically no churches ready to employ them.

The educational program of the church was held in low esteem by the average church member. Even Sunday school work was sadly lacking in prestige. A favorite riddle of the day was, "When is a school not a school?" The answer: "When it is a Sunday school." There were preachers as well as laymen who sent their children to Sunday school instead of taking them.

Sunday school was generally regarded as an organization for women and children, not for grown men. Red and blue seals for training courses were openly ridiculed.

Price was amazed that others did not share his vision, did not realize that the task of giving the Bible to the masses was too big an undertaking for preachers alone and that laymen and women must be trained to help. Dr. Carroll had seen the vision in his day. He had said: "The seminary will not be restricted to preachers. It will aid in the training of Sunday school teachers of both sexes." Dr. Scarborough was thoroughly committed to a school of religious education for lay people.

But others took quite a different attitude. Some very worthy people simply raised their eyebrows at his efforts in the field of religious education. The old established theological departments were inclined to look a bit skeptically at the new young department coming up alongside them. Southern Seminary continually stressed in its advertising and announcements that it was a school for ministers only. A few ministers were beligerently sure that only the ordained should be given seminary training.

Once when Price returned to Kentucky to speak at the state Baptist convention, he reported the total number of students at Southwestern. One minister rose and asked condescendingly: "But how many of them are preachers? A seminary connotes preachers." His emphatic pronouncement might have downed a less worthy opponent. But Price was ready for him. He replied: "The word 'seminary' connotes no such thing. Etymologically, it means a 'seed plot,' and was originally applied to girls' schools."

So here was the herculean task—to create a vision, to overcome prejudice, to develop a curriculum, and to enlist a constituency. It was not an easy job. In fact, it sometimes seemed as impossible as was the task to which a little boy in one of Price's favorite stories set himself.

A pastor approached a home on Saturday afternoon. A little Primary boy sat on the steps. The following exchange took place. "Where is your father?" "Out on the golf links." "Where is your mother?" "Down at the bridge club." "Your brother?" "Gone to a picture show." "Your sister?" "Out driving with her boy friend." "The maid?" "The maid? She's at the beauty parlor." "Well, then, why are you here by yourself this afternoon?" "Oh, I couldn't leave. You see, I have got the old tomcat in the refrigerator, making a polar bear out of him."

Not knowing exactly which way to go in his efforts was discouraging and disconcerting. One day, as Price looked through some old papers, he came upon an oration he had prepared and delivered during his student days at Bowling Green. This paper, written eleven years earlier, and entitled "The Logic of Hard Knocks," acted as a shot in the arm for his courage. It revealed to him that somehow he had been enabled to push forward when in those earlier days demands, seemingly beyond his time and energies, had been made on him. And again he would be able to surmount obstacles and stand above them as victor.

And so he plugged away, teaching six hours a week and planning constantly for the years ahead.

In January he returned to Kentucky for the golden wedding anniversary of his parents. Every one of the children was there for this occasion. How good it was to be with his family! He was thirty-one years old now, but he was still the youngest, and received his share and more of the teasing. "Are you going to be an old bachelor all of your life?" "How's your work coming? We don't expect you to set the world on fire, but we do want you to try." "You don't count off for spelling, do you? Surely you haven't forgotten how you used to spell." "Why don't you learn to write better? Your handwriting is so bad that the last time I got a letter from you I took it down to the pharmacist and asked him to fill the prescription!"

There was love, there was loyalty, and there was encouragement in this old Kentucky home. Price went to be in the attic room that had been his in boyhood days. He thought of his boyhood hero, Daniel Boone, and recalled an incident in his life. Boone had been asked by portrait painter Chester Harding if he had ever been lost in the trackless wilderness. "No, but I was bewildered once for three days," replied the old hunter with a twinkle in his eyes.

"I've been bewildered about the direction my school will take for lots longer than three days," Price grinned to himself. He remembered that soon after the beginning of World War I the French general Joffre had said, in realization of the magnitude of this war, "All former experience in war may as well be thrown on the scrap heap." "Yes," Price thought sleepily, "all former experience in training for religious education must go on the scrap heap. My school must be on a bigger and better scale. I might as well face it. I must blaze a new trail in religious education."

To Mabel, My Wife

MANY OF DR. PRICE's students can remember his remark, made with a perfectly straight face: "You don't know what happiness is until you get married, and then it is too late to do anything about it!"

They have joined in the laughter, recognizing that statement as one of his frequent efforts to surprise them into alert listening. They know that his has been an unusually happy and successful marriage—one that has filled his every need.

He spent only one year as the one unmarried professor at Southwestern. As the school year drew to a close, and he was still being introduced with, "This is our bachelor professor," he always longed to retort, "But not for much longer!"

Still he did not tell his co-workers about Mabel. One of them said of him, "That fellow can keep quiet in seven different languages!" He and Mabel were exchanging letters very regularly now, and, luckily, several of his field trips took him through Waco that first year he was in Fort Worth.

The girls in Mabel's dormitory noticed that her blue eyes sparkled brilliantly when he was coming, that she hummed as she went about her duties, and that she displayed an amazing enthusiasm over a simple visit from a former teacher. They gathered in her room to quiz her once after she had spent an evening with him. "Where did he take you, and what did you do?" they demanded. Her demure answer was, "Why, he took

me to the graveyard, and we looked at Dr. Carroll's grave."

There is absolutely no basis for the laughing taunt hurled at him once—"I'll bet you proposed to her by asking, 'How would you like to see my name on your tombstone?'"

The last part of the year was very hard for Mabel. While Price was groping his way, devising plans to develop a School of Religious Education, she was faltering with fatigue and wondering if she could stay in school. The doctor told her she had tuberculosis and that she needed a rest. Her father became critically ill, and this was the deciding factor. She would go home, help care for her father, and try to regain her health. Her father's death came just about the time school closed.

Price wrote, asking: "Why should we wait any longer to get married? Dr. Scarborough will be returning from a revival July 11. He could stop off there and perform the ceremony for us."

One July morning thirty-one-year-old J. M. Price walked to the streetcar stop on Seminary Hill. His steps seemed unusually jaunty, although he carried a large suitcase. It was not unusual for him to be smiling, but on this day his grin seemed to cover his entire face. Mrs. W. W. Barnes saw him and called out: "I see you're leaving us. Are you planning to bring a bride back in that big suitcase?" His only answer was a wave of the hand and an enigmatic smile.

On July 11, 1916, in Marlow, Oklahoma, Mabel Falk and John Milburn Price were united in marriage. It was an unpretentious wedding in the Falk home. They liked things done without too much fuss and bother. Then, too, Mabel's father had been dead only six weeks. But the relatives who attended felt that it was a lovely wedding. Dr. Scarborough's voice was impressive as he said those meaningful words, "For better, for worse, in sickness, in health, for richer, for poorer, till death do you part."

The wedding guests escorted the newlyweds to the train station. The ever efficient grapevine had borne the news to Mabel's piano pupils that their beloved teacher was getting

married to her former teacher, so they came to the station to tease her about being "an apple polisher" and to throw rice. Dr. Scarborough got so much rice down his collar that he complained cheerfully, "I wish they'd realize that I'm not getting married."

They caught the train to Oklahoma City. From there their honeymoon took them to Pelham Springs, Alabama, for a Baptist assembly. The main speaker for the week tried to appear very calm and collected, as if he had been married for years. Next they went to Kentucky, to visit with loved ones while Price led in several revivals. What a joy it gave him to introduce Mabel to his own people and his own native countryside! She saw the deep love he had for his home, for the woods where he had hunted as a boy, for the small Sunday school where he had been taught the Word of God. Almost hesitantly he showed her a poem he had written in an effort to express that love.

I have seen the plains of Texas
Gazed upon the ocean wide,
I have climbed the mighty Rockies
Stood by grand Niagara's side,
But of all the scenes of beauty
That my eyes have looked upon
There is none like old Kentucky
When the autumn time has come.

Trees of green and brown and purple—
Golden tints and amber hue—
Leafy carpets, many-colored,
Found in one enchanting view
Corn shocks thick and wheat a growing
Luscious pumpkins lying 'round
Apples juicy, sorghum cooking
Nothing like it can be found.

Autumn time in old Kentucky,
When earth's yielding up her fruit

Does of this world's scenes and seasons
Fondest memory nearest suit.
And if I could choose my going
When life's paths I cease to roam
It would be midst autumn's grandeur
In my old Kentucky home.

J. M. P.

The summer flew by on wings. Soon it was time to take Mabel to Seminary Hill and introduce her to the friends and colaborers there. It was good to receive their congratulations on his marriage and to hear their joking question, "How did a homely old teacher like you manage to get such a pretty young girl?" He'd usually reply: "Why, I rescued her! There are so many fellows in uniform now I was afraid she'd be swept off her feet by one."

Mabel was fascinated by Seminary Hill, but a bit dismayed at its barren appearance. There was not a tree anywhere. But a person in love can be happy without trees, and life seemed a wonderful adventure as they began their light housekeeping in the home of Dr. and Mrs. Ball.

This second year seemed to Price to be superior in every way to his first year. Now he had a wife to go home to. Also, he had worked out a two-year program of study leading to the Diploma in Religious Education. And this year there were six pupils majoring in religious education.

Always, however, his mind was busy on the problem, "What can I do to make my department recognized, to give it the prestige it deserves?" One answer came to him. He should have his earned doctor's degree since most of the professors in the school of theology had this degree or were working toward it.

So the last semester of this year and the summer months were spent in Louisville working toward the Th.D. degree. The seminary was still located downtown, and the Prices rented an apartment close to the campus.

The days were tense with wondering about the war. President

Wilson was inaugurated for his second term. He called Congress to meet in special session. He said in his message to Congress that America must make the world "safe for democracy." And on the day when Mabel knew positively that before the year was over she would have a baby, the United States declared war.

As the time approached to return to Seminary Hill, they felt that they should have a home for their baby to be born in. They wrote Dr. Crowder, asking if he could locate a house for them. He sent a picture of one that was available and close to the campus. They bought it, sight unseen, and lived there for ten years, until they built the present Price house.

School opened again, with everyone wondering what the war would do to the enrolment. Price was gratified that there were nine religious education majors. November brought the wonderful news of the armistice, and in December the eagerly anticipated baby daughter arrived. When Price saw his small baby girl, he felt that she should be named Mabel Elizabeth, for his wife and his mother, the two women who had so greatly influenced his life. And Mabel happily agreed.

Months sped along, crowded with happy tasks and incessant planning. There were discouragements, but much to encourage. The fall of 1918 brought only eight religious education students, but a year later, when the war was over, there were nineteen.

In 1919 Price enlarged the curriculum of his school, and the degree of Bachelor of Religious Education was offered. That year he completed his thesis on "Psychology of the New Birth" and received his Th.D. degree from Louisville.

In 1920 a three-year curriculum was instituted, leading to the degree of Master of Religious Education, and Price took time out to spend half a semester at the School of Religious Education of Boston University, studying with Dr. Walter Athearn.

In February, 1921, Price's second child, a son, was born. This time Mabel named the baby. He was John Milburn Price, Jr.

The remainder of this chapter will not follow along the years. It will be a look at the Price home. Joe was born in 1928, and James Olis, or Jimmy, in 1930.

When Price wrote his thesis for his Th.D. degree in 1919, he dedicated it "To My Wife—Faithful and Inspiring Companion." Almost forty years later when his book *Mastering Life's Problems* was published, it bore the dedication, "To Mabel, My Wife—Faithful Companion Through the Years." Dr. Price would be the first to say that much of the credit for his amazing contribution in the field of religious education has been due to Mabel, his cherished wife.

The Lord seems to endow the wives of traveling denominational servants with extra courage, extra patience, and extra wisdom, for the crises of life always seem to come while their husbands are away from home. These crises must be met single-handedly.

The four Price children would tell you that their sudden fevers, their unexpected accidents, and their momentous decisions always came while Dad was away on a speaking engagement. Mother had to cope with them alone.

Life had tutored Mabel for this role. She had been a second mother to her smaller brothers and sisters. She had directed their study at home and, as her father expressed it, "been like a governess to the four younger ones." Now she had four of her own to guide and direct.

She greatly regretted that she did not have the opportunity to graduate from college. She was determined to take classwork at the seminary and receive her degree there. But tremendous obstacles prevented her from achieving this ambition for many years. One of these obstacles was her devoted, but never-quite-on-time husband. The plan was for him to come and sit with the baby while she went to class. She would get ready to go, and watch, and watch, and watch for the approaching form of her beloved. But he usually became so engrossed in an article he was writing for publication, or a chapel talk he was preparing,



Fiftieth anniversary picture of Mr. and Mrs. John P. Price with Norman E. Price, Joseph L. Price, Mrs. Mahala Price Fulton, Olis L. Price, and J. Milburn Price.



J. M. Price Hall, completed in 1949 at a cost of \$457,000, provides offices and classrooms for the School of Religious Education

or a speech he must make in a distant state, that he was oblivious of the moving hands of the clock. When he would finally appear, he could not understand his wife's agitation. "Why didn't you just go on?" he asked. "You knew I'd be here, even if I did come a few minutes late. The baby would have been all right for those few minutes."

But Mabel loved her baby too much and understood her husband too well to ever risk this arrangement. She gave up her classwork for the years when her children were small. She never gave up her dream.

Thirty years after her marriage, in 1946, there was a graduation day at Southwestern that the Price family will always remember. Son John graduated with his B.D. degree. His wife graduated with the Diploma in Religious Education. And Mabel, yes, this was her day, too. She graduated with the Diploma in Sacred Music.

There was a beautiful custom in those days at Southwestern graduation. As students' names were called for the granting of their degrees, relatives in the audience were asked to stand. It is a well-known fact that those relatives had often made real sacrifices to keep the student in school. When Mrs. Price walked forward to receive her diploma, her admiring husband sat quite still. Dr. Barnes nudged him, to remind him to rise. Dr. Price said, "No, sir, I won't stand; they will think she is my daughter."

In spite of the fact, or perhaps because of the fact, that Mabel had to assume more responsibility than most wives, she seemed to reap greater rewards. When son John felt the Lord was calling him to preach, his mother was the first person he told. And, as usual, she had the comforting words he needed to hear.

"Mother, I'm sure God is calling me into his service. But I could never preach and teach like Dad does."

"But he doesn't want you to be like Dad. He wants you to use the talents he gave you, to preach and teach like yourself."

When the children fell in love, it was to Mother they whis-

pered the exciting news first. When John began to preach, it was Mother who heard him preach his sermons at home in rehearsal. Once she protested: "I wish I could help you more. But I'm not a preacher." "No," came the cheerful answer, "but you're a mighty good listener."

Dad's continual absences gave opportunities to plan tricks and surprises for him. The one the family enjoys telling about most happened when he had been married for almost twenty years. Mabel and her sister Maud were still identical twins, with not a half pound's difference in their weight. A recent picture of the two of them, which sits in the Prices' living room, looks like trick photography—two shots of the same person. They still dress alike at times, for if one twin finds a dress she likes a great deal, she often buys two and sends one to her sister.

Aunt Maud came from Oklahoma to pay a surprise visit to the Price family. The "circuit-riding study course teacher" was away as usual, but was expected home on Saturday morning. The children clamored: "Mother, let's fool Daddy! Let's make him think Aunt Maud is you!" (Daddy had often bragged that he didn't believe Maud's husband could tell the sisters apart but that he was one who could certainly identify his wife!)

Everybody got into the spirit of the conspiracy. Mother hid behind the door. Aunt Maud busied herself with a dish towel. The children waited in wicked anticipation. Finally, the car drove up. A student had met Dr. Price at the station. They had stopped by the grocery store, and came in the kitchen door laden with groceries.

Dad put down his armload of sacks and turned to greet "his wife." Just as he bent his head to kiss her, she backed away and said in icy tones, "Sir! don't kiss another man's wife!" Howls of glee came from the throats of the young Prices. Mother appeared, trying to look as if she had been betrayed.

Dr. Price, whose face was suddenly flaming red, tried the strategy of making a countercharge and demanded, "Well, what do you mean, wearing my wife's dress?"

"Sir! I'll have you to understand that this is my own dress," Maud managed in insulted tones, before they all doubled up with laughter.

The four Price children were all born in the Price home. They all graduated from Baylor. John tells of an amusing incident that took place during the Christmas holidays of his first year at Baylor. Says he:

Before I went to college, I had no particular interest in the seminary at Fort Worth and knew very little about what Dad taught. I simply knew he "worked" there. I felt called to the ministry just prior to entering college. One of the first courses I took was an introduction to psychology. I was fascinated by it. During the Christmas holidays I felt that I should "educate" my father.

I went into his study for a man-to-man talk. I asked him if he had ever heard of psychology. He nodded and said, "Vaguely." I began to recite its virtues and to explain some of the terms, words, and people I had learned about in my three months' study. He listened with a sly smile. After I had told him much more than I really knew, being encouraged to keep on expounding by his careful attention, he said, "If you should desire to do some further reading in the field during the holidays, I have some books you might find helpful."

I looked behind him. There was a whole wall of bookshelves filled with psychology books. Some of them were the textbooks he used in the courses he taught. That was the way I found out that he had been teaching religious psychology and counseling for over twenty-five years in the seminary at Fort Worth.

The Prices wanted the best for their children, and they were smart enough to know that the best was not money, but treasures in the mind and heart. They wanted their children to love and appreciate their native land, and four summers were highlighted with long trips in the car.

One summer they drove to the Southeast, seeing New Orleans, Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Charleston, and winding up at Ridgecrest. Another summer they saw the Southwest, including Petrified Forest, Grand Canyon, Los Angeles, and Yosemite. On a trip into the Northwest they saw the Indian ceremonials

in Arizona, Salt Lake, Yellowstone Park, and Denver. Later, a trip into the Northeast included Chicago, Niagara, Boston, the New York World's Fair, Philadelphia, and Washington.

Price's love for graduate study rubbed off on his children. Elizabeth took a degree in library science from the University of Chicago and did library work in Washington, D.C. She met and married Lt. Col. Victor C. Hobday of Kentucky and makes her home in Knoxville, Tennessee.

The second child, John M. Price, Jr., took his B.D. and M.R.E. work at Southwestern and his Th.D. with a major in religious education at the New Orleans Seminary. He is now head of the School of Religious Education there, teaching in the field of psychology. He married Rebecca Walker of Florida, whom he met while they were both students at Baylor. His family is like his father's—a girl first, then three boys.

John tells of one time when he evened the score with his father for letting him show off his little knowledge of psychology. His father was visiting him at the New Orleans Seminary. As they walked along the sidewalk together, students said, "Hello, Dr. Price," "Good morning, Dr. Price." To each one his father would reply with a hearty hello.

Finally John stopped him and said: "Doc, it pains me deeply to tell you this, but these people are not saying, 'Hello, Dr. Price' to you. They don't even know who you are. These are my students, and they are talking to me." His father got a good laugh out of the situation.

The two younger Price boys, Joe and Jim, make their home with their parents in Fort Worth. Both were in service during the Korean War. Joe has his B.A., B.S., and M.A. degrees, the last from North Texas State College at Denton. His major has been psychology, and he is a counselor. Jim took his B.A. and LL.B degrees at Baylor, and is an attorney, following in the footsteps of his uncle for whom he was named.

The Price children have become a blessing, and a tremendous amount of credit for it goes to quiet, unassuming Mabel Price.

Here I Raise Mine Ebenezer

J. M. PRICE IS A MAN of cheerful disposition. His cheerfulness is based on a deep-as-life conviction that God is good and that he will help his children when they undertake great things for him. Dr. Price has wanted his students through the years to develop an optimistic outlook. He has emphasized the difference between a pessimist and an optimist with these stories.

One old lady was taken to see her first freight train years ago. As she watched the long train with its many cars going down the tracks, she shook her head dolefully. "Just think," she lamented, "how much destruction it would cause if it went through here sideways."

But hats off to those who see the happy side! One old lady had only two teeth, but she thanked the Lord they hit!

And there was the layman who, when the pastor failed to show up, was called upon unexpectedly to say something at the funeral of a ne'er-do-well. He cleared his throat and began, "Jim wasn't as bad all of the time as he was some of the time."

Price remained cheerful and optimistic during the beginning years when so few students enrolled to study religious education. And he was rewarded when in the fall of 1920 he had 71 religious education majors in comparison to 19 the year before. In 1921 there were 121 students. This was the year that the department of Religious Education was organized into the School of Religious Education. A milestone had been reached.

He decided that he should set down the history of his school. He wrote:

SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our school had its incipency in a course in religious pedagogy offered in Baylor University by Dr. Frederick Eby as early as 1906 (the first college credit course ever offered) when the Seminary was still a part of the Bible Department of Baylor. In fact, when it was separated and moved from Baylor, he was greatly interested in seeing a full-fledged department developed.

For some time after coming to Fort Worth in 1910, only one course was offered covering the history, psychology, pedagogy, organization, curriculum, and administration of religious education in the church and home—a rather broad covering. That year special lectures were given in addition on Sunday School and young people's work by Sunday School Board field secretaries, Harvey Beauchamp and E. E. Lee. Also the Principal of the Training School gave special lectures in Kindergarten methods, and the "Professor of Sunday School Pedagogy" gave lectures on Sunday School problems. On the faculty page of the catalogue this "Professor of Sunday School Pedagogy" was listed but no name given.

In 1914 Dr. J. B. Gambrell, then State Superintendent of Missions for Texas, asked Secretary Harvey Beauchamp to suggest a Texas Baptist Sunday School Program. One of his ten suggestions was: "Secure the establishment of a School of Religious Pedagogy either at Fort Worth or Waco as a permanent feature either of the Southwestern Theological Seminary or Baylor University. Its course of study should lead to some degrees such as Bachelor, Master, and Doctor of Religious Pedagogy. Such a school ought to draw pupils from all parts of the United States, and elicit the support of the denomination in a most remarkable way.

So the stage was set for the initiation of the School of Religious Education by President, Faculty, and Trustees in 1915.

He then listed some high lights of the first six years.

During the first year, one student, George A. Miller, enrolled for this special work. Others including preachers and women took the courses.

During the next year another course "Practice in Sunday School Work" was added to the five courses taught the first year. This was probably the first laboratory course ever offered for credit in this field.

Miss Lou Ella Austin was graduated in May 1917. She is the first person anywhere to receive a diploma designated "Religious Education."

In the fall session of 1919 three distinct developments were made. One was the instituting of age group studies, another pioneer activity among Baptists. A course was given in Elementary Education. Another was offered in adolescent and adult work.

A second advanced step was that Th.D. students were permitted to have religious education as a major. The third step was outlining the course leading to the degree Bachelor of Religious Education. This required a third year beyond the Diploma. All three of these were most significant developments.

In the school year beginning in the fall of 1920, developments came fast. N. R. Drummond and Bertha Mitchell were added to the faculty. Twelve courses were offered. The course in practice work was expanded to two years. A three year course of study was outlined, leading to the degree Master of Religious Education, for college graduates. In May 1921, our first degree in religious education (B.R.E.) was earned by J. W. Davis.

A definite turning point was reached in 1921 when the work was formally set up as a separate school. Actually it had been that for some time. Kindergarten work was transferred from Woman's Missionary Training School to the School of Religious Education, with Miss Mitchell in charge. A course in Social Recreation was offered for credit, the first of its kind in any seminary. The fact that our 121 students represent 16 states shows how our influence is expanding.

He did not add that this progress was a result of his blood, sweat, and tears. He was speaking constantly at state encampments, at B.Y.P.U. conventions, at Ridgecrest; anywhere and everywhere he was urging young people to consider church work as their life's vocation. He was writing articles for all the Baptist papers and magazines, reminding young people of the need for trained church workers.

His sixteen page tract *Finding One's Life Work* was issued by the B.Y.P.U. Department of the Baptist Sunday School

Board and was instantly acclaimed as the best small work on the subject. In it he quoted Carlyle's statement, "Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness." He often applied this quotation to himself. He had found his work. It was difficult enough to demand his best. It was challenging enough to deserve a lifetime's effort. It was satisfying enough to make him feel that sometime he would hear his Master's "Well done."

Other factors were causing his School of Religious Education to grow. World War I brought a fresh realization of the need for well-trained missionaries. The 75 Million Campaign, launched in 1919, had a special "calling out the called" emphasis that was impressing young people with the challenge of giving their lives in Christian service. Dr. Scarborough, the director of that campaign, was speaking all over the land, and people made it their business to find out more about the seminary that was headed by this amazing leader, this man in whose heart was a white-hot passion for the souls of men.

In 1920 the news came to Price that his father had died shortly before his eighty-first birthday. Memories of his father's influence over him came trooping back to his mind. His father had made him sturdy and independent. For this he was grateful. He appreciated the fact that his father had given him eighty-three dollars to help with his college expenses, but he appreciated even more the fact that he had trained him to make his own way.

He remembered his father's stories about his Civil War general, Nathan Bedford Forrest, who wanted his army to get there "fustest with the mostest." Fate had seen that he, J. M. Price, got there "fustest" in the business of offering vocational training in religious education. He would have to see that it was "with the mostest."

Searching always for new ideas for his school, he selected men with whom he'd like to study and spent his summers in their classes. In the summer of 1923 he studied with E. D. Star-

buck at the University of Chicago, in 1924 he studied at the University of Dubuque under James H. Snowden, and in 1925 at Mercer University under Rufus W. Weaver.

On Armistice Day, 1924, the message came that his brother Olis—the one only four years older than Price—had died at the age of forty-four. His father's death four years earlier had been expected, but Olis' death, when he was in his prime, was a real blow.

Blows may cause J. M. Price to pause, but they never cause him to stop. One of the mottoes of his life is taken from the ballad "Johnnie Armstrong's Last Good Night."

Says Johnnie, "Fight on, my merry men all,
I'm a little wounded, but I am not slain;
I will lay me down for to bleed awhile,
Then I'll rise and fight with you again."

Students remember that Dr. Price shortens the last two lines a bit as he quotes to his classes: "I'll lay me down and bleed awhile, and then I'll rise and fight again."

And he was always ready to fight again for his school. J. M. Price's courage came from the realization that the cause for which he fought was a worthy one.

Almost before he realized it, 1925 had rolled around; and this was a most important year. The seminary ceased to be a Texas institution and became an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention—Convention-wide in its outlook and control. This was a great forward step. The eyes of all Southern Baptists focused upon it. The interest of all Southern Baptists was kindled for it.

Then in this year 1925 Southern Baptists adopted their Co-operative Program. This meant that financing would be done on a Convention basis, not by individual institutions.

Price wished that Carroll might have lived to see this day. He knew how much time, effort, and prayer Carroll had expended in providing the finances of Southwestern. He had

heard some of the pleas Carroll had made to individuals and to churches for funds.

Price remembered that soon after the seminary came to Fort Worth Carroll had sent an appeal to many pastors: "I am up a tree. Can't you and your fine men help me?" Frank Shelby Groner, pastor of the First Church, Stamford, Texas, replied: "I am in a hole. I must call my fine men together to raise \$14,000.00 to pay on a pressing debt on our building. How can a man in a hole help a man up a tree?" Carroll replied: "When you come up the tree to help me down, you will be out of your hole."⁵

Yes, 1925 was a wonderful year. The seminary became a Southern Baptist institution, and the Convention, through its Cooperative Program, would finance it.

1925 meant, too, that Price had been at the seminary for a decade. He did two things to mark the occasion. The first was to write a song for the School of Religious Education. The biographer's private opinion is that had Price been forced to make his living writing songs, he would have starved to death long ago. But because it shows his courage, his willingness to attempt any task for his beloved school, the song is given. Surely, you will be surprised that it was not to the tune of "My Old Kentucky Home"!

S.R.E. SOUTHWESTERN
(Tune: "Maryland, My Maryland")

From far and near we've come to thee,
S.R.E. Southwestern,
Henceforth our teacher, leader be,
S.R.E. Southwestern,
Grant us thy nurture through the days,
Help us to learn of wisdom's ways,
Let life to higher heights be raised,
S.R.E. Southwestern.

⁵ From *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958), II, 1280.

Fair Alma Mater, school so dear,
 S.R.E. Southwestern,
 Thou moulder of our character,
 S.R.E. Southwestern,
 For vision clear, for purpose strong,
 To teach, to train, to guide the young
 Our gratitude we voice in song,
 S.R.E. Southwestern.

Long may thy banner lead us on,
 S.R.E. Southwestern,
 At home, abroad till victory's won,
 S.R.E. Southwestern.
 May children, youth of every land,
 Be lifted by thy mighty hand,
 Till all in Christ united stand,
 S.R.E. Southwestern.

J. M. P.

His second endeavor was to list the firsts in the history of Southwestern's School of Religious Education. It made a truly imposing list, and he went over and over it, like a holy man counting his beads.

As J. M. Price rounded out his first ten years at Southwestern, he realized that three convictions had guided him. Life is good. It is given to us by a loving Heavenly Father. Life is not necessarily easy. Sometimes it is a grindstone, and whether it grinds a man down or polishes him up depends on the stuff he is made of! Then life is an opportunity for service. It is having a mission that makes life worth living.

He had found his mission. He had come to his place "by way of the throne of God," as Dr. Scarborough had suggested. And he had found his life very good.

Sometimes 'mid Scenes of Deepest Gloom

THINGS WERE GOING wonderfully well for J. M. Price and the School of Religious Education that he founded.

He had championed the cause of religious education through word and pen all over the Convention, and he was beginning to see results. He saw results in church buildings. In 1915 they usually were constructed in a rectangular shape. If there were any classrooms, they were in the basement. Now, however, they were being built to meet the needs of the pupils. (Today, of course, there are a number of Southern Baptist churches with plants so large they resemble college campuses!)

He saw results in that more and more churches were asking for trained workers in the field of religious education. And he was trying to make sure that the ones he trained knew their jobs thoroughly. He enlarged his curriculum and his staff. By 1925 the school was departmentized into (1) Principles of Religious Education, (2) Administration of Religious Education, (3) Adolescent Religious Education, (4) Elementary Education and Arts, (5) Kindergarten Education, (6) Christian Sociology, (7) Religious Journalism, and (8) Church Efficiency.

And how careful he was in the selection of his teachers! He chose those who had not only college and seminary training but also five to ten years of experience in their field. To the two

faculty members he had previously secured he added T. B. Maston, L. A. Myers, Mrs. Ora Belle Jones, W. L. Howse, and Mrs. W. A. Johnson. T. B. Maston received the first D.R.E. degree granted by the school in May, 1925. Now forty courses were being offered—practical courses in religious dramatics, visual education, storytelling, and journalism as well as the courses in principles.

And students were coming for this training. In 1928 the enrolment of the school reached 142, with 42 in the graduating class. Even so, there were never enough students to fill the requests for workers that came from the churches.

Price began to build a new home. His salary was raised, his family was growing, his faculty increasing, his student body enlarging, more and more calls were coming for him to speak at various meetings—everything was wonderful! Often he found himself humming the grand old hymn "He Leadeth Me!" He would put special emphasis on the line, "Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom." But that was before the depression.

The depression! Write it with capital letters. Whisper it with muted breath. The chapter has not been written that describes adequately that period of tribulation and what it meant to faculty members in Baptist institutions.

J. M. Price completed his new home in the fall of 1928, in time for the birth of Joe, his third child, who was born on Armistice Day. Jim was born two years later. To build this new home he went \$4,200 in debt. In ordinary times he could have paid off this debt without too much strain. But not in the depression years! Each year he received less and less salary. An entire chapter could be written about that. The seminary's first move in an effort to meet the emergency was to cut the professors' salaries by one third. Salaries that had been \$4,500 a year were cut overnight to \$3,000. And less than half of that could be paid. For six years his salary averaged less than \$1500 in cash. One year he got only \$1,080. Instead of paying what he owed, he was forced to make new debts. For the next seven

years he went deeper into debt at the rate of \$300 a year, so that finally he owed \$6,300.

This was an appalling, an abhorrent fact. This was a galling, revolting situation for one who had hated debt all of his life, for one whose parents before him had avoided debt like poison. He had a wife and four growing children. Two of his children would soon be ready for college. How could he manage? What a poor provider he had turned out to be!

Each month the seminary paid smaller and smaller proportions of the salary that was due. Eventually, they were a whole year behind with salaries. Pantries were empty. Clothes were threadbare. Thoughtless students failed to realize that hats "green, not with envy but with age" were worn not from choice, but of necessity. The hardest thing the professors faced was having to deny their children things they wanted and actually needed.

All the professors were in the same plight. One lost his home entirely. One said, "It's never pleasant to discover a moth hole in a garment you unpack, but yesterday I found my wife weeping over a moth hole as if it were one of life's tragedies." Another told Price as Christmas, 1931, was approaching: "I went by the business office to see if *any* money had come in, if we could get *any* small amount on our salaries. The business manager looked at me sadly, then said: 'I'm sorry. There is nothing.' Christmas, and I don't even have the price of a Christmas tree!" Similar experiences were had by all.

The administration knew and shared the privations of the faculty. Every aid possible was given, but when there was no money coming in, none could be paid the teachers. They resorted to the old custom of barter. The seminary owned some citrus groves. They would be deeded to faculty members in lieu of unpaid salaries. The seminary owned some rent houses. They, too, went to the professors in the place of money. At the time, Price would have preferred money to the ownership of the houses. But in later years he laughed and said he'd never

have been able to put four children through Baylor without the rent money from those same houses.

But things grew worse. Dr. Price had to let some of his carefully chosen and splendidly trained teachers go. There was simply no money to pay them. As he told Dr. Drummond, Dr. L. A. Myers, and Mrs. Jones good-by, it was almost like a funeral. He had had such great dreams of what they could teach his students when he had brought them there. Now he watched his dreams shatter and die. The time came when there were only two regular teachers left besides Price—Dr. Maston and Miss Barnard. The teaching load was shared by two part-time temporary teachers and two student assistants. Departments were reduced from seven to four. Instead of forty-eight courses, there were thirty-two. And no one could foresee a change for the better.

At night, when he couldn't sleep, Price would think of his boyhood days. Again he could hear his father's voice: "Vicksburg was a battle of endurance." He would think grimly, "The depression is a battle of endurance, too." The question was, Could he stick it out, or would he finally surrender as they had at Vicksburg? He would not surrender. He was comforted as he remembered that sixty-five years earlier seminary professors at Louisville had weathered a situation as grim as this and even worse. He recalled Broadus' famous words, "Suppose we quietly agree that the seminary may die, but we'll die first."

But he couldn't die! He would leave a wife and children unprovided for, for he was borrowing to the limit on his insurance. He would pay a premium on an insurance policy, which would raise the loan value. Then in the same mail he would make application for the loan of the increase. It was better not to remember that his brother Olis had died at a younger age than that he himself had now reached.

And the students—thinking of them would break your heart. Only a few years ago the enrolment of the School of Religious Education had reached 157. Now there were only 92 enrolled,

and few of them could afford to stay for three years. There were only 17 in the graduating class. All the students were struggling desperately to remain in school. Lucky were the ones who knew a bit about carpenter work or painting. If faculty members needed repair work on their homes, they would employ students to do the work. Not a penny of money was exchanged, but the seminary would credit the amount to the sum owed to the school by the student and take that much off the amount owed the professor on unpaid salary. Those were difficult days for all concerned.

Wives of young students did the washing for people who could afford to have it done. All of the students were needy, those with jobs as well as those without, for churches did not pay their staff members on time. One young bride of only a few months said ruefully: "I'm church organist, and Bill is music director. But they're so far behind on our salaries! My folks got a pretty nice trousseau together for me this fall. So I sit up in church, dressed like Mrs. Astor, knowing all the time that after service we'll go home to a Sunday dinner of cheese and crackers."

The seminary dining hall gave a refund of twenty-five cents a meal if a student signed out that he would miss as many as three consecutive meals. Seventy-five cents seemed such a fortune that some of the students would sign out and substitute an ice cream cone (five cents) for one meal, a cup of tea made in the room for the second, and would fast for the third.

Price and the other faculty members worried about these students, even as they worried about themselves and their own families. In an effort to encourage the student body to stay in school, Dr. Ray each year in chapel told the story of his financial troubles during 1882 and the help of Dr. B. H. Carroll.

In the spring of my senior year at Baylor, on account of the long illness . . . I found myself utterly without means. On the way home from prayer meeting one night I said, "Doctor, I shall have to leave school." When he inquired why I was going, I said: "I am out of

money. I owe you now for three months' board and am utterly unwilling to be a pensioner upon your generosity any further." He took me by the arm and said, "My boy, you know you don't have to pay board at my house unless you want to. Go on and finish your course, and when you get out and make the money you can pay your board, if you so desire." "But," I said, "Doctor, I haven't any clothes." He looked at me and said, "What's that you've got on?" One thing I had on was a little clay worsted single-button cutaway coat, which one of my fellow students had discarded. It was green, not with envy, but with age, and the braid had all worn off, leaving the white thread showing all up and down the front. As for shoes—well, the least said about them the better. Suffice it to say that I had to black my shoes and socks at the same time to reduce them to a common denominator. So I said, "But Doctor, I am going to graduate in June, and I could not think of graduating in this rig." . . . He stopped me under a street light and, placing his hands upon my shoulders, looked down upon me and said, "My boy, you have come to the parting of the ways. You are about to determine the kind of man you are going to be for the rest of your life. At the college commencement there will be two kinds of people—fools and people who have sense. If you come to graduate in this rig, all the fools will say, 'If I did not have better clothes than that I would not present myself for graduation.' But all the sensible people will say, 'That's my kind of man. Doubtless those are the best clothes he has, but he shows that he believes there is something else in life more to be desired than clothes.' And now you are about to decide whether for the rest of your life you are going to play to the fools or to the people who have sense." . . . Not another word was spoken until we entered his study. . . . He walked to a shelf and took down a book . . . of the poems of Robert Burns. He . . . said, "Read that and then pray, and tell me at breakfast what you are going to do." With that he left me standing with . . . "A Man's a Man for a' That." I read it, I more than read it; I committed it to memory. I ate it up, I burned it into my soul.

I slept little that night. I fought the battle royal of my life. If you think it childish that there should be such a struggle over the mere matter of clothes you must not forget that I was just a boy, as proud as Lucifer, as vain as a peacock.

Next morning I supposed that he had forgotten all about it. But even before he asked the blessing at the table, he fastened his kind gray eyes upon me and said, "Well, my boy, what have you decided

to do?" I began to cry and in the midst of my emotion said, "I am going to stay," and I did stay, thank God.

The iron that he put into my blood that night has been of more value to me than if he had endowed me with a million dollars. In view of that story, do you wonder that for these forty years I have thanked God upon every remembrance of him?"⁶

Finally Price was forced to borrow money from his older brother Norman, who had stayed on the farm. It was ironical that the farmer would have to help the brother who had all the schooling and who had set out to conquer the world!

The little income from his writing helped a bit. In 1928 he wrote his first book, *Christianity and Social Problems*, and dedicated it "To the Memory of my Father, My First and Finest Example of Christian Citizenship." He led in a movement to place religious education in the curriculum of denominational schools. Textbooks were needed for this effort. So he collaborated with several authors to produce them. *Introduction to Religious Education* was published in 1932, *Program of Religious Education* in 1937, and *Survey of Religious Education* in 1940.

He wrote a study course book, *Personal Factors in Character Building*, in 1934. This was a psychological approach to character building and met with instant and enthusiastic response. Recently he has revised and rewritten this under the title *Formative Factors in Christian Character*.

These books were in addition to countless articles for denominational publications and the developing of lecture material for classes.

Those were hard days—hard physically, mentally, and spiritually. And yet, he had to go on. He could not, having put his hand to the plow, look back. Price had come to Texas to invest his life in a school. It never occurred to him to look for greener pastures elsewhere.

⁶ Jeff D. Ray, *B. H. Carroll* (Nashville: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1927), pp. 161-64.

No, he would stay by the stuff; but what a terrific strain it was! Mabel would watch him anxiously as he sat hunched over his desk for hours at a time, juggling figures on a piece of paper, trying to find something else that the family could do without, trying to decide on the bare minimum it took to live, wondering what they would do if a hospital experience became necessary for any one of them. Mabel would urge quietly: "Don't work on those figures all night. We haven't starved yet. I'm afraid you'll go berserk."

Then she made her decision. She would start teaching piano again, as she had before her marriage. The music lessons helped the financial situation a little, and, too, she enjoyed this activity. She continued giving lessons, and has taught a generation of pupils. After twenty years she swapped in her upright piano on a baby grand, and the lessons still go on.

A deep gloom seemed to have settled over Dr. Price. It was hard to find anything to chuckle over. His family needed things. His friends needed things. Privation was everywhere. But one day in turning through some old papers, he found the October, 1910, issue of *The Literary*, the monthly publication of the literary societies of Baylor University during his student days. He had saved this issue because it contained his winning address in the prohibition oratorical contest. He found in it a little verse scattered through several pages of ads. It went:

ONE WEEK

The year had gloomily begun For Willie Weeks, a poor man's	SUN.
He was beset with bill and dun And he had very little	MON.
"This cash," said he, "won't pay my dues; I've nothing here but ones and	TUES."
A bright thought struck him, and he said, "The rich Miss Goldrock I will	WED."

But when he paid his court to her,
 She lisped, but firmly said, "No THUR."

"Alas," said he, "then I must die!"
 His soul went where they say souls FRI.

They found his gloves, and coat and hat
 The coroner upon them SAT.

The silly jingle had a therapeutic effect. He laughed and laughed and declared that he was not quite so bad off as friend Willie.

He began searching for other bits of nonsense that would bring a chuckle to his family and associates. In the same issue of *The Literary* he found:

B. U. TAILOR'S MOTTO

Don't worry,	Marry young,
Don't fuss,	Praise your wife,
Don't hurry,	Keep your temper,
Don't cuss,	And enjoy life,
Be cheerful,	Get a home,
Don't fret,	Stop paying rent,
Pay your bills,	Grow wealthy
Don't bet.	And be content.

"I'd love to follow the motto's advice about paying my bills and growing wealthy, too," he'd say, "but I'm just not able to."

Soon he came to a decision. "Students who pastor country churches make more money than I do. I can't teach and serve as pastor of a large church. But surely some nearby country church needs a preacher. And country people have food to share, whether they pay any money or not."

Thus began his experience with the small Webb Baptist Church, twenty-one miles from Seminary Hill. The people there did share their supplies. The pastor loved his people. He continued to serve them for twenty-one years, until he felt that

they needed a pastor who could live on the field. He served the Mansfield Baptist Church also on a half-time basis from 1934 to 1942. He left them to give full time to Webb. This story will be told in another chapter.

With agonizing slowness, the depression came to an end. The student body had ceased its rapid growth during the years of hard times. One hundred and twenty-one students in the School of Religious Education in 1921 had seemed wonderful. In 1930, nine years later, there were only 143. The school was barely holding its own. But money became more plentiful, and by 1940 the number had increased to 343. In 1917 there was one graduate, in 1921 there were seven, and in 1930 there were twenty-seven graduates. By 1940 there were sixty-four.

Things were looking up. The Lord had seen them through the lean years. Now the Price family could sing with understanding:

Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
By waters still, o'er troubled sea,
Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me!

Dear as the Apple of Thine Eye

THE PERSON WHO IS ASKED to write the biography of J. M. Price is first stunned at the responsibility, then amazed at the opportunities that come because of the assignment. Three such opportunities that came as this material was gathered will provide memories for a lifetime.

One was the trip to western Kentucky to see the birthplace of this honored teacher, to meet his relatives, to visit the cemetery where his loved ones are buried, to walk where he walked. There is the humorous recollection of a conversation with a first cousin of Dr. Price, Rev. L. V. Henson, eighty-six years old at the time of the interview, with fifty-nine years in the ministry to his credit. Rev. Henson enjoyed talking about his illustrious cousin, remembering again the one-room-school-house days. The interview went famously, even though he parried the answer to some questions, such as, "Was he a mischievous boy?" with, "What good would it do for me to report on him now?"

Yes, the interview went well, until the biographer asked innocently, "Are you a native of Kentucky, Brother Henson?" The twinkling eyes became stern. They looked at her with a chilly expression, almost as if she had asked, "Are you an honest man?" The quick answer came in clipped, emphatic tones, as if he

were replying to an insult: "Well, I certainly would hate to be a native of any other state!"

A Kentuckian—and proud, proud of it! And, confidentially, as the biographer spied out the land, she fell victim to the charm of the countryside. There were the greening trees in all their stately beauty, the broad rivers, the thick carpet of grass, the abundant flowers of May, including flaming red roses and deep purple iris. For the first time she realized that it must have been a real sacrifice for J. M. Price to leave this beautiful section of the country to plant his life on Seminary Hill, barren and bare as it was in the early days.

The entire Price clan is fiercely loyal to the Bluegrass State. And Kentucky is proud of the Prices, and has bestowed honors on many of them. One of the recognitions which J. M. Price values exceedingly came from Kentucky. It is dated the third day of December, 1943, in the 152nd year of the Commonwealth. It is signed by Keen Johnson, Governor, and George Glen Hatcher, Secretary of State. It declares:

In the name and by the authority of the
Commonwealth of Kentucky
Hon. John Milburn Price, Ft. Worth, Texas,
having been duly appointed
is hereby commissioned as an aide-de-camp on the staff
of the governor, with the rank and grade of Colonel.

Besides the trip to Kentucky, the biographer had a visit to Seminary Hill for conferences and research. How things had changed at her alma mater since her student days of a generation earlier! How refreshing it was to visit with old professors, to meet new ones, and to journey, via the library, back into the days before she became a student. There was one particular catalog, the one for 1918, that made her wish for all her friends who had served at various times as secretary to Dr. Price. How they would have chuckled over one short line in that catalog!

This biographer has never known a secretary of Dr. Price's

who did not love and admire him. But all of them have had one heavy cross to bear. His handwriting is atrocious and exceedingly small. His learned books and widely circulated articles have all been written with a stubby pencil on torn-out, unused sheets from the back of examination books. His secretaries have had the task of deciphering his hieroglyphics, and how they have "sweated it out."

Back in 1918 professors at Southwestern had no secretaries. When it was time to prepare a catalog, each professor wrote out in longhand a description of his courses. The long-suffering printer could not read some of Dr. Price's handwriting. He put a note to that effect when he returned the catalog to the proofreader. But the proofreader did not catch it; and there it is for all posterity to see:

Christian Sociology 1

Text and Reference Book: Have to have better copy.

How the other professors enjoyed teasing him about this catalog! The day after the catalog appeared Price found a volume of the encyclopedia on his desk. It was opened carefully to an article on Horace Greeley. Price often had teased Mabel by saying that he had followed Greeley's advice, "Go west, young man," and it had gotten him into trouble. But why would anyone put this on his desk? Then he noticed a very faint line under two sentences in the article: "His handwriting was so poor that it was the despair of typesetters on the newspapers." "For brilliancy of mind and moral courage he was unsurpassed among the men of his day." Was someone teasing him? He never gave anyone the satisfaction of hearing him comment on this article.

A third cherished experience to keep in memory's treasure chest was the Sunday trip to Webb Church—a trip made with Dr. Price during the bluebonnet season in April. How the eyes of the church people lighted up when they saw their former pastor! They exclaimed, "We thought it was about time you

came back to see us." And to this visitor, "You know, we'd like to call him back," and, "There's nobody like him."

It is good to remember Dr. Price's simple comments: "I was pastor here for twenty-one years—long enough to baptize and sometimes marry the second generation. Often I was not sure which I enjoyed most—the country church pastoral work or the seminary directing and teaching. One thing I know: serving Webb Church was about the richest experience of life."

It was midsummer of 1928 when Dr. Price decided that for two reasons he should again become a pastor. One reason was frankly financial. Depression days were beginning, and any supplement of salary, however small, would help out. The second reason was a deep-felt need of keeping in close touch with local church life. His colleagues in the School of Religious Education were serving large churches of Fort Worth in the role of educational director. This was good, for they could answer any perturbed student's question, "But, will this work?" with, "Oh, yes. We are doing this in my church."

Since his co-workers were in large churches, Dr. Price felt he should serve in a small rural church. After all, these rural churches had supplied the lifeblood for the denomination during early decades. They must not be neglected now. Then, too, he liked small rural churches. He had grown up in one.

So when Webb Church called for a supply pastor in August, Dr. Price went with alacrity. He immediately won the hearts of these rural people, many of whom had only the vaguest notion of what his job "in town" was. Webb was a quarter-time church. (For the uninitiated, that means there was preaching only one Sunday a month.) They called him to become their regular pastor in September, at a beginning salary of twenty dollars a month.

There were about ninety church members. They, too, were feeling the first pinch of the depression. The church was behind financially. They had tried having a church budget, but the plan had not worked, and a deep prejudice had arisen over the

whole matter—over this business of making pledges or even trying to be systematic about the finances of the church.

Their new pastor knew that all churches need budgets. He was positive that this, *his* church, needed one, but he did not want to shove it down the throats of his people. He was willing to take time to convince them of their need. First of all, he won their complete confidence. They all knew that he wanted only what was best for them. And he made it sound so logical. "Let's have a budget. A budget is simply deciding ahead of time how you wish to spend your money. If you'd rather make your gift annually, when you harvest your crops, that is all right. If you prefer giving monthly, on preaching days, that is all right, too. You may prefer giving every Sunday when the Sunday school meets. It's your church, and we want you to be happy."

Also: "Some of you are afraid to make a pledge—afraid hard times are coming and you won't be able to pay it. Pledge to tithe. Remember the amount can be increased, reduced, or canceled at any time."

As to designations: "Why, do as you think wisest. Designate it all to local causes, if that is what you wish. Designate it all to mission enterprises, if you feel that is right. Or, leave your offering to be divided as the church decides it should be, if you feel that is a good policy." It was heartening to see how many felt that the latter plan was a good policy. Dr. Price has always believed in people, their wisdom, and their right to choose.

This rural church, made up principally of farmers, became one of the most consistent in its giving of any to be found. The Sunday school was reorganized, a Training Union set up, a WMU brought into being. The church became half time. Later they decided to have preaching every Sunday morning.

Twice a month Dr. Price stayed out and visited all Sunday afternoon and helped with Training Union on Sunday night. He averaged about six visits a Sunday through the twenty-one years he was pastor there. Oh, those visits! How the people enjoyed them, once they got used to them. Before this the house-

wives had put on their Sunday dresses and entertained the preacher in the parlor. But this pastor came without warning, went right into the kitchen, asked for a glass of buttermilk, talked to the children, admired the dogs, and before you could say "Jack Robinson," was out in the back checking on the crops. Once, during a ten-day revival meeting, he visited in sixty-four homes. The guest evangelist, Dr. Ramsey Pollard, exclaimed ruefully: "I wore myself to a nub trying to keep up with him. My job was getting out of the car to open and close the gates in the wire fences for Dr. Price to drive through. And after all our intensive visiting, he said he felt better after the revival than he did when it started."

The church grew steadily. When services were held twice a month, his salary was raised to forty dollars. When services were held each Sunday, he was paid seventy-five dollars a month.

What a joy it was to go to Webb! Being there brought back his boyhood days when he had lived on a farm. The deacons took him squirrel hunting, his favorite sport of earlier years. They were amazed at his keen delight in hunting, at his skill as a marksman, and at his stamina. They didn't know exactly what his age was, but figured he was older than they.

The thing they didn't realize was that he had spent a lifetime getting ready for these hunts. His home had been one mile from the post office at Fair Dealing. Mail came in two or three times a week, and he was sent to pick it up. Long before he knew anything about the training that track men do, he decided to run the mile to the post office and to trot home, in order to develop muscle and endurance.

Cold weather did not bother him. He had helped to feed the cattle in the bottom fields on Bear Creek during weather that was sometimes twelve to fourteen degrees below zero. Going without sleep was not a problem. He had made occasional all-night trips in the wagon to Paducah, thirty miles away, to market hogs and other produce. Riding home the second night, he had feared that weariness might overtake him, causing him to

fall asleep and roll off the wagon. To guard against this, he would lie on his stomach on top of a hog coop and put his hands and his feet down between the planks. In this position he could not roll off. Truly, he had been preparing for these hunts all his life.

Trips to Webb did him good. He got away from town, from student problems, and from pressure. And those trips were a never ceasing delight to his children. Son John is remembered at Webb for his prowess at riding the calves. Webb members recall Joe's startled question, "Is it customary for a whole family to go to somebody's house for dinner like we do?"

But Webb folks were delighted to feed the visitors from Fort Worth. Often Dr. Price brought two students along with him to work with the elementary groups and the young people. It meant a great deal to the students to get away from the city and dormitory meals, to go to a little church like the one back home, and to have a home-cooked Sunday dinner.

The years at Webb could almost be called a parade of progress. It is true that the parade seldom marched at a fast tempo. But it did march. At first there were no lights in the church and no pews. There were only homemade benches. The floors had never been sanded. There were nine Sunday school classes meeting in the auditorium.

Gradually things changed. A departmentized Sunday school was set up. Pews were purchased. An educational addition was constructed, containing eight rooms. It took care of the elementary and young people's work. A baptistry was added to the auditorium, with a beautiful painting in the back. Best of all, a young man from the church felt God's leadership to become a preacher. His pastor helped him to become a student at Southwestern.

But Price was working himself out of a job. He wanted these people who had such a large place in his heart to have a pastor who lived on the field. So he led them to build a pastorium. His work at Webb closed in September, 1949, the day the church

dedicated the new pastorium. The pastor wondered why the lump in his throat seemed so large as his people sang:

I love Thy church, O God!
Her walls before Thee stand,
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And graven on Thy hand.

Because many students had heard Dr. Price speak of Webb during the years he served there, a story concerning it would have great reader appeal. So the Southern Baptist *Home Missions* magazine carried an article about it in the January, 1950, issue. The article was entitled: "Seminary Professor Shows the Way in a Rural Church." Excerpts from this article are quoted:

Twenty miles out in the open country from Fort Worth, Texas, is a rural church, the Webb Baptist Church, which stands as a monument to the 21 years of service given to it by Dr. J. M. Price.

On the half acre site, now stand three debt-free buildings, where once was a one room \$1,500 building and a quarter-time church.

The spacious auditorium, educational annex, and the new pastorium are surrounded by well-landscaped lawns with shrubbery, and are shaded by improved thin-shell pecan trees that bore 30 pounds of pecans last season. Incidentally, these pecans cost a certain member \$30. When the trees were set out against his judgment he vowed, "I'll give \$1 a pound for all the pecans we ever get from those trees."

The new pastorium has electric lights, butane gas, hot and cold water, hardwood floors and modern built-in features.

The year before Dr. Price became pastor, the total offerings amounted to \$435.87. The total gifts last year were \$5,892.82. The membership of the church has tripled. The church pays the salary of a native worker in Africa.

The years at Webb were golden years. It is no wonder Dr. Price said musingly, "Being pastor there was just about the richest experience of life."

Blazing Three New Trails

J. M. PRICE BELIEVES that people should not be afraid to stand for their convictions or to venture into new paths. Through the years he has had a pet illustration concerning being swayed by crowd influence. It is included here because it will appear as a familiar friend to two generations of students.

A Negro boy from Tennessee stole a wagon and team from a Negro widow, drove it off, and sold it. Like the prodigal son, he spent all his money. Finally, he drifted back into the community he had left as a criminal. The widow did not want to take the matter to court. Instead, she brought the boy into church for a church trial. The church decided he should be excluded, but before any action was taken, he asked permission to say a word. He started: "We are all sinners—poor, miserable sinners. The Good Book says you are to forgive. Seventy times seven you are to forgive. So why don't we stand and sing a song and let all who are willing to forgive me come by and shake my hand?" Those who were least affected by the incident came first. Gradually all came except the widow. The boy made one more appeal, the crowd sang another verse, and she came.

Price is certainly not a conformist, swayed by crowd influence. He makes his own decisions. He stands by his own convictions. He blazes new trails.

His pioneer efforts led to three permanent organizations: the state Sunday School Convention of Texas, the Southwestern

Baptist Religious Education Association, and the Accreditation Commission for the American Association of Schools of Religious Education.

The Sunday School Convention of Texas

Dr. Price would be the first to admit that when he arrived in Fort Worth, back in 1915, he attempted to mount his horse and ride off in all directions. He was busy for quite awhile before he knew which direction he should take. Dr. Scarborough had written him before his arrival that much field work would be expected of him. This assignment might have kept a less hardy man from accepting the job at the seminary, but Price delighted in going places and seeing things. Dr. Scarborough's letter had said:

We want you to give some of your time, say Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays—and all your time during the summers—to visiting churches, Sunday Schools, conferences and conventions, working out modern methods with the local schools and churches. We want you to organize in Fort Worth a great movement for the betterment of the Sunday Schools in and for fifty miles around Fort Worth, getting in touch with all Sunday School teachers and officers, taking members of your classes out to those Sunday Schools and giving them practical work in modernizing and building up these church schools for the glory of Christ.

What an assignment!

Price lost no time in finding his place in the state Baptist work of Texas. In November, 1915, he was one of the speakers at a King's Teachers Alumni banquet at the Driskill Hotel in Austin. This was given for the purpose of laying great emphasis on teacher training work. The next year he served on the faculty of the big Dallas Training School. He visited Waco, Houston, and many other cities for similar weeks. The annual Tarrant County Baptist Sunday School Training School (Fort Worth is located in Tarrant County), held at Broadway

Church, led the South in enrolment and attendance for many years.

Dr. Price believed that leaders who were experiencing similar problems should come together for discussion and inspiration. He talked over this idea with William P. Phillips, state Sunday school secretary of Texas. As a result, a statewide Sunday school superintendents' conference was held at the seminary June 6-9, 1920. Those attending paid the low rate of \$1.50 per day for room and meals. People who are familiar with the Seminary Hill of today, completely surrounded by the city of Fort Worth, will be interested in the instructions sent to those attending. They indicate how far out in the country was the Seminary Hill of that day. "On reaching Fort Worth take a Hemphill street car and go to the end of the line. There you will transfer to the Seminary car."

This part of the country was becoming well known for its outstanding Sunday school work. Another announcement on the printed folder said, "One of the most valuable privileges of the meeting will be that of visiting several of the largest and most efficient Sunday Schools to be found anywhere."

This meeting of superintendents was held annually. In 1926 it became the state Sunday School Convention.

Let no modern reader think lightly of these early efforts. Many of the stalwarts among Southern Baptist leaders were enlisted in these meetings. Dr. Price treasures an August, 1945, letter written by Dr. Edgar Williamson, who led Arkansas Baptists in their educational work for many years. This letter recalled distinctly the values of Sunday school work pointed out by Dr. Price in a message at an early conference for Sunday school superintendents.

The Southwestern Baptist Religious Education Association

From the time he dedicated his life to the cause of religious education, J. M. Price's tongue and pen have been used constantly in the effort to enlist and train others.

In *The Southwestern Journal of Theology*, Vol. I, No. 1, April, 1917, there is an article by Price, entitled "Religious Education as a Life Work." The last paragraph of this article is given here:

The need today is two-fold. One is that our churches and schools shall make larger room in their program for religious education as a life work, though they have already done so sufficiently to create a demand beyond the supply. The other, and chief need, is that a number of the keen, consecrated, young men of our churches and schools shall give their lives to the work of religious education and set about now to make adequate preparation for the task. When these needs are met we will see a new day in Zion.

In the June, 1923, issue of *The Baptist Student* there is an article by Price, entitled "A New Field for College Graduates." It begins:

There has opened for college graduates a new field of activity. Five years ago it was almost unheard of in the South. Five years hence it will be one of the most prominent. Already it is attracting much interest and attention. I speak of the vocation of the religious educator.

In every conference he held he presented the challenge of religious education as a lifework. That he succeeded in enlisting the finest is shown by a letter from Dr. W. Forbes Yarborough, who states that attendance upon a class of church workers taught by Dr. Price for two weeks had resulted in his own enrolment in the School of Religious Education at Fort Worth the next year.

How could he best help the ones who were making religious education their lifework? He decided on a conference on vocational Sunday school and B.Y.P.U. work, to be held April 15-17, 1921. This time the seminary would provide free entertainment to all delegates. This conference was important because it was the first distinctively vocational conference on religious

education held in the South. The response was better than he could have hoped. Representatives came from four states, sixteen schools, and sixty-four churches. An informal meeting of those already in religious educational work was held. Out of this grew the Southwestern Baptist Religious Education Association.

Price served as acting president in 1921. He served as president again in 1939, 1945, and 1955. In 1958 he was elected president emeritus of the organization. From the beginning it was designed to help those engaged in educational work. In 1955 Price wrote: "This meeting has been distinctive in that there are no spell-binding speakers. The program is made up of prepared papers, open discussion and forums, and has maintained a sustained interest through the years. I have never been absent from a meeting."

Because this meeting was so very helpful, similar organizations, patterned after this, were later formed east of the Mississippi River, on the West coast, and on a southwide basis. Price served as the first president of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association.

After the Southwestern Baptist Religious Education Association was launched, Price helped with the organizing of the Association of Southern Baptist Teachers of Religious Education, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Education Association, and served as president of the organization.

The American Association of Schools of Religious Education

J. M. Price's contribution to Southern Baptists can never be estimated, but perhaps few readers know what he has done for the nation. This work has been spoken of by him as "probably the most interesting piece of work I have ever done."

In 1935 the National Association of Administrators of Schools and Departments of Religious Education and Social Work was organized, with eight members present. The group met in a private room in a hotel, in conjunction with the International

Council of Religious Education. Their charter required this. Price attended this meeting for the first time in 1940. He enjoyed his contacts with the leaders of other denominations and other conventions. He was always eager to find out what they were thinking and in what direction they were piloting their schools. It was a privilege to swap problems and solutions with Dr. Norman Richardson of Northwestern; Dr. Karl Stolz, president of Hartford School of Religious Pedagogy; Dr. E. B. Paisley, of the Presbyterian Assembly School in Richmond; and Dr. R. G. Clapp, of the Schauffler School in Cleveland.

But Price grieved because this organization continued to be so small. They never had more than fourteen in attendance, usually not more than six or eight.

Through the years he had nurtured a great unrealized ambition. He wanted to see his child, the School of Religious Education, accredited. "First in the South, largest in the world"—but not accredited, because there was no recognized accrediting agency. Who would work out the standard of accreditation? The American Association of Theological Schools showed no interest in this. This group of administrators in the field of religious education would have to see that it was done.

Everything within Price rebelled at the way the association carried on its work. Its potential was too great to condone the way meetings were held, sitting in a hotel room on the beds and a few chairs, talking over the problems and achievements of their schools of religious education, and discussing, but doing nothing about, a national accrediting agency.

In 1946 Price was elected president. He knew that such important business merited a larger attendance and a more formal meeting. He knew that this group would never become nationally recognized as an accrediting agency unless it was enlarged. He did not confide in the others, but he came to a momentous decision. He would either enlarge the organization, or he would let it die! He grinned as he meditated on the fact that if he chose the latter alternative the world would not be

shaken. The small meetings in hotel rooms would not be missed by the masses.

But he realized in his heart that he could not let the organization that he headed fade away. He would enlarge it. From the dim recesses of memory came that statement he had written on the wall of the first schoolhouse he attended: "I resolve to be diligent, for by diligence and patience the mouse bit in two the cable."

During 1946 he visited professors of religious education in New Orleans, Atlanta, Nashville, and Dallas. He talked with them about his conviction that the American Association of Schools of Religious Education would never develop while tied on to another body. He asked if they would go along with him if he conveniently "forgot" the stipulation of the constitution and called for a meeting at a time and place entirely separate from the International Council of Religious Education. They would.

He called a meeting on December 26-27, 1946, at the Hotel Gibson, Cincinnati. Would the leaders come? It would mean giving up part of their Christmas vacations. Almost he was tempted to worry. But they came. Twenty-one institutions were represented at this first meeting, 50 per cent more than ever before in history.

And they decided it was worth missing the vacation time with their families as they listened to this new president who was determined that they should get out of their rut and accomplish something. "We must do something about accreditation and we must do it NOW! We must do it for the sake of our graduates—to give them proper standing in the academic world. Twelve years and three distinct efforts to develop a national organization for mutual counsel and accreditation is long enough in which TO GET STARTED! Time is wasting, and the cause is suffering! It's time to ACT."

And act they did! A new name was given to the organization, a new constitution was formulated, an accreditation commis-

sion was set up, and this president with his amazing "forgetter" and his contagious enthusiasm was unanimously re-elected.

Before they would release him, he had served for six years as president. He filled four one-year terms and one two-year term. And attendance continued to grow. In 1947, 24 institutions were represented; the next year there were 32. Then in 1949 there were 60 present, and they represented 48 institutions. This attendance was more representative of the more than 125 schools located across the nation giving B.R.E. or M.R.E. degrees or a major in religious education for the B.A. or M.A. degree.

Price made two trips to the Department of Education in Washington. Things did not look too promising after the first trip, but Price encouraged himself with, "I'll lay me down and bleed awhile, and then I'll rise and fight again." He made a second trip. The result: the American Association of Schools of Religious Education is now listed by the Department of Education as a national accrediting agency.

And, lest you forget, Price's baby, the School of Religious Education of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, is fully accredited.

Perhaps you will not be surprised if you talk to Dr. Price about this achievement of his and hear him say, "I'm prouder of this than any one thing I've done." And he should be. He helped not only his own school but every school of religious education across the nation.

The Man Himself

WHAT KIND OF MAN was this director of the School of Religious Education, who managed to crowd so many achievements into the passing years?

He never lost the common touch. He was always able to communicate with the man in the street. There are those who have let their years spent in the academic world make them so bookish and so technical that only their fellow scholars can understand them. This was never true of Price.

In 1930, when he was forty-five years old, Price returned to Louisville to earn his Ph.D. degree. This would even things out nicely. He would have two Bachelor's degrees, two Master's degrees, and two Doctor's degrees.

As always, he enjoyed slipping back into the role of student. It was good to be teased by the old-timers: "Say, fellow, it's a blessing you don't have to go through your doctoral examinations again. We remember what happened back in 1919 when you were getting your Th.D. You came out of that room, looking pale, and C. Oscar Johnson asked you how you got along in your examination. You answered, 'It was the most wonderful experience I ever had, showing the relationship between God and man and man and man.' Then you almost dropped to the ground in a dead faint."

Price was pleased at the progress being made at his alma mater. The seminary had moved from Broadway to "The

Beeches." The new president, Dr. John R. Sampey, was a great admirer of Robert E. Lee. Price would listen to his eulogies of Lee and wish that his father might have heard them.

Price was asked about his school in Texas and to state the philosophy of religious education that it stressed. He stated four propositions very clearly:

1. The supreme need of civilization is not material equipment or economic prosperity or enlightenment, but a religious and moral dynamic.
2. The primary agency for meeting the religious and moral need is not the state or industry or the press or the school, but the church.
3. The most effective method in the church is not the inspirational mass meeting activity, but the teaching process of various age groups.
4. The most strategic time is not in adulthood, but rather in childhood and youth. This gives the foundational basis for the educational program of our churches.

This ability to communicate, to have something worthwhile to say, and then to express it so clearly that it can be understood by those with limited educational backgrounds has been one of the secrets of his popularity as a speaker.

Another outstanding characteristic is his likableness. People who work for him, people of other religious views, people in high places or in low—all find it easy to like this man who treats everyone as if he is important. One of the reasons that people like him is the fact that he is agreeable at all times. One of his secretaries wrote him of her appreciation of that fact: "You only grinned when I mailed an important letter to 'Boston,' Texas instead of 'Austin.' Your future secretaries could greatly improve over this one, but I don't believe they could appreciate their 'boss' more."

Another secretary wrote of him: "He treated me as an equal, and this was true of many others like me. Though I was just his secretary, he made me feel like my opinions were worth something—and I'd have done almost anything for him. He had a

way of making us much younger people feel that we were completely contemporaries of his."

The same secretary wrote concerning the schedule by which Dr. Price worked:

Dr. Price generally arrived at the office in time for chapel (10:00 A.M.) unless there was a special reason for his being earlier. He had his classes immediately after chapel, worked in the office (mostly appointments with students) until about 1:30 or 2:00, then went home for lunch. He usually took a nap until about 3:30, came back to the office and worked until about 5:30 or 6:00. Since he had so many interruptions in the afternoons, he liked to give me dictation after everyone had left the building. This, of course, meant my staying past regular office hours. To make up for this, I came in later in the mornings. He seemed to appreciate my willingness to stay later in the afternoons more than anything else I did for him. When he was dictating, he would dictate a letter and then talk with me about something—maybe what he had written or what he was going to write or simply some joke he had been reminded of. We discussed just about everything during the time I worked for him, and I wouldn't take anything for the experience.

Another Price characteristic was the despair of his family and friends until they decided they would have to accept it. He is habitually late. This is caused by his trying to crowd more into the hours than they can possibly contain. Mrs. Price cannot begin to estimate the number of meals she has waited and waited for him. Finally, she decided that she and the children would eat at mealtime and she would feed him whenever he came in.

Students have wished that Dr. Price would be either on time or just a bit later! There is a rule at Southwestern that if a teacher is as much as fifteen minutes late for class, students are dismissed. As they waited and watched their watches, Price would usually appear fourteen minutes past the hour—late but not quite late enough.

Students and friends who have driven him to the airport to catch a plane remember how their hearts would palpitate as

they raced to meet the schedule, because he wanted to arrive just in time with no wasted minutes at the airport.

That is his way of doing things—just in time. A secretary gave an illustration of this when she said:

I remember one year he “brought the house down” on Founder’s Day. He had been chosen to give the address on Dr. Carroll. When he got up to speak, he said, “When Dr. Head asked me to give this address six months ago, I didn’t know I would be so busy these last three days.” Actually, that was the truth. I had typed his speech at home the night before, and he had done the whole thing in the “last three days.” But it was an excellent address.

He had the practice of trying to answer all letters that had piled up—just before going on a trip. Nearly always we would stay quite late a day or so before one of his out-of-town engagements cleaning up every detail that had been hanging for weeks. It nearly always took me the whole time he was gone from the office to do the work he left before going on a trip.

Another characteristic was Dr. Price’s dislike of anything mechanical. Perhaps he felt that it took away the personal touch.

Because he did not like to work late in the afternoons, we tried to get him to use a dictating machine. A church, whose pastor was a former student, gave money for such a machine; and the Dictaphone salesman left a machine on Dr. Price’s desk for about ten days for him to try. He didn’t touch it the whole time, said it was “too civilized” for him! Although I would have loved getting off at the regular quitting time, I would have missed all the good fellowship we had between letters.

One said of him:

I believe he is allergic to all things mechanical. Perhaps his only disappointment in Price Hall was its intercom system, and its phones with different buttons that light up when certain lines are in use. Many times he would get up and go into another office to see someone he wanted to talk to rather than use those “civilized” things.

Because his next characteristic is illustrated with an activity of Price's that took place during World War II, we take time to mention that in 1940 the school observed its twenty-fifth anniversary. Price had spent a quarter of a century on Seminary Hill. It was a triple anniversary occasion. Dr. Scarborough had been president for twenty-five years. Both the School of Religious Education and the School of Sacred Music had been functioning for twenty-five years. Dr. Price was asked to furnish the history of his school. He wrote:

"It started with one teacher and two students. It now has six teachers and 269 students. . . . It has enrolled 898 separate students, and graduated 402 who have gone throughout the South, the North and foreign lands."

One of the stories Dr. Price has delighted to tell through the years concerns the midget in the circus who married the fat lady. After the ceremony, he stood off a few steps, looked her over admiringly, and said, "Just to think—acres and acres of her, and she's all mine!" One wonders if he had something of the same feeling of awe as he thought of the 898 people who had passed through his school: "Just to think—hundreds and hundreds of them, and they're all mine!"

The accomplishments of his school were listed in the attractive brochure done in silver that was a memento of the occasion.

After the good anniversary year of 1940 came 1941, bringing with it World War II. Price groaned, remembering what World War I had done to his school. Then he began to think of his students—educational directors scattered everywhere—who were subject to the draft. He knew that preachers were exempted from the draft, and he came to a very positive conviction that educational directors should be exempted also. He felt that if ever they were needed at home it was during troubled war years.

Few people shared his conviction, but that did not bother him particularly. It would just take him longer to bring this thing about.

J. M. Price began a one-man crusade to see that educational directors were exempted and were given status. He wrote innumerable letters, first to congressmen and senators, then to pastors. The matter was so clear in his own mind he wanted others to think straight on it too. One of the many letters he wrote on the subject is given in portion here that the reader may understand Dr. Price's feeling on this matter:

Personally I see no reason why any young man who commits his life to the field of religious education or music may not be ordained to the ministry with these phases or with either of them in mind. My approach to it is this: If one who is ordained to the ministry with preaching in mind, may later be an editor of a paper; president of a school; teacher in an institution; head of an orphanage or a hospital; field worker in Sunday School, Training Union, B. S. U., and other lines, and still retain his ordination papers as countless numbers do—then there is no good reason why ordination in the first place should not be broad enough to include any full-time vocational religious work.

A number of churches have done just that. One of the first instances was at Ardmore, Oklahoma, when Dr. Dana, who taught ecclesiology here; Dr. Barnes, who taught Baptist history; and myself ordained a young man to the ministry with the educational phase in mind, who later did go into the pastorate. A number of other churches have done so in recent years.

The Southern Baptist Convention at its meeting in St. Louis in 1947 adopted a statement to the effect that churches should "certify" laymen committed to full-time work in the field of religious education or sacred music. Many churches have done that and give them a certificate comparable to that given to the general ministry. I am enclosing my statement along that line.

I think it ought to be said that the whole matter of ordination does not find much emphasis in the New Testament. It is a thing that we have developed in our ecclesiology with quite a bit of ceremony and not too much biblical basis. I might say further that the procedure in ordaining these workers to religious education or music or both, is similar to that for the pastoral minister. And, as indicated, either that or ordination to the ministry with this phase in mind is coming to be very general now.

Besides his extensive correspondence, he led organizations to which he belonged to endorse this effort. The American Association of Schools of Religious Education sent a resolution to the National Headquarters of Selective Service System, urging the exemption of educational workers. The Inter-Seminary Conference of Southern, Southwestern, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminaries in session at Seminary Hill, January, 1947, petitioned the Southern Baptist Convention to adopt a statement saying that men who give evidence of a divine call to the religious vocations of religious education and sacred music be given such consideration as this status merits.

The Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Miami in 1952 took action on this. Again, the Convention meeting in Houston in 1953 passed the following:

RESOLUTION REGARDING SELECTIVE SERVICE LEGISLATION
FOR VOCATIONAL LAY RELIGIOUS WORKERS

WHEREAS, the resolution passed by this Convention last year requesting the National Selective Service Headquarters to authorize the 4-D classification for denominationally-certified, full-time, vocational lay religious workers has not received a definite statement of policy from this department, with no indication that it will, and

WHEREAS, there still exists wide discrepancy on the part of local boards throughout the country in granting this standing, resulting in great hardship to individuals, and to churches, with no recourse except an appeal to the President,

THEREFORE, this Convention respectfully petitions the Congress of the United States to change "and" to "or" in Article 1622.43 Section 16 of Selective Service regulations so as to read "preaches" or "teaches," or provide whatever other legislation is necessary to give these workers and students preparing for this work the 4-D classification.

A resolution was submitted to the Southern Baptist Convention the next year by Price and Alfred Carpenter, asking that the Convention go on record as endorsing the bill that Congressman Wingate Lucas of Fort Worth had introduced in the

Eighty-third Congress concerning giving the 4-D classification to music and education directors.

He was sure he was right about this thing. Therefore, he was willing to keep trying to bring it about. General Lewis B. Hershey, director of the Selective Service System, came to know the persistent Price very well. A copy of a letter he wrote to the Honorable Dewey Short, Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, contains the sentence, "I have on many occasions pointed out to Mr. Price. . . ."

Price made a trip to Washington to Selective Service headquarters. His friend and co-worker Dr. W. L. Howse remarked that if the folks in Washington knew the determination of the little man with big ideas they'd go ahead and do what he asked them to without fuss and bother. Finally, those in charge were convinced. Selective Service headquarters agreed to interpret the existing law to include ministers of education (when ordained, licensed, or certified). Price could write across his file, "Mission accomplished."

This perseverance of Dr. Price was evident in matters big or small. Dorothy Hair Sherman was his part-time secretary during 1941-42, while she was a student at the seminary. After graduation she took a job with the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. She came back to Seminary Hill in 1949 to serve as Price's full-time secretary until 1953. She commented on his tenacity and perseverance:

Every few months while I was in Nashville I would get a letter from Dr. Price, asking whether I was interested in returning to the seminary as his secretary. I said no three or four times, but that never did keep him from asking me again. Dr. Floy Barnard, a teacher at the seminary, told me he did her the same way before she came to teach. He seems to make up his mind about a thing and then just never gives up. Once he told me that it was a rule of his life to be sure he was right about a thing and then never to quit trying to bring it about. It seems that defeats along the way, in all areas of life, never were real defeats to him. He would just bide his time and bring it up again in a little while.

One of his outstanding characteristics is his frugality. He believes in saving money. He instructed his secretaries to crowd mimeographed material on one stencil rather than use two. He preferred that a letter would be crowded onto one page rather than run over on a second page with only a few lines.

Clothes are not important on him. The hats he wore were battered. He liked to tease his secretary by throwing his hat into the office when he came in the afternoons. Then he'd walk in, chuckling that if his hat didn't come back he figured it was safe to come on in himself. In very recent years he gained weight and attained his lifelong ambition to weigh 150 pounds. Did he use this increased size as an excuse to buy new clothes? No. He asked Mrs. Price to slit the vests in the back and put in a piece of material, in order that the vests would reach around him. Of course, the material didn't match, but that was unimportant. He'd have his coat on, anyhow.

Students have laughed about his frugality and passed on the legend that in his first year of light housekeeping at Dr. Ball's he spent twenty-five cents for some oilcloth to put on the wall behind the stove, then spent the remainder of the year arguing with Mrs. Ball that he should be allowed to deduct the quarter from his rent.

He does have a respect for money, for it can provide educational opportunities and trips. But his is a generous nature. Few people know of his efforts in behalf of others. When one of the first teachers he brought to the seminary was taken with a lingering illness, he talked seminary officials into giving her a pension. When he met a fine girl in Greece who wanted to come to America to school, he crusaded for funds for her until he could write her to "come on. I have the money in hand."

J. M. Price loves his projects. He gets a deep joy out of seeing something worthwhile through to the end. More than fifty years ago he took part in a debate in the Maple Springs schoolhouse. The subject was "*Resolved*, That there is more pleasure in pursuit than there is in possession." He started:

"Pursuit is the wine of the soul, the exhilaration of the palace and the joy of the humblest home. It was the love of pursuit and adventure that inspired Daniel Boone to leave his peaceful habitation in North Carolina and wend his way westward to the wilderness of Kentucky, where not many generations ago the rank thistle nodded in the wind, and the wild fox dug his hole unscared."

Through his long years at Southwestern Price has had a tremendous influence on the lives of other people. Dr. W. L. Howse, in his book *Those Treasured Hours*, has a chapter on "Remembered Teachers." He closes his discussion with a sincere tribute to Price.

Another teacher I remember is Dr. J. M. Price. It was my privilege to be his pupil and also to serve on the faculty of Southwestern Seminary under his direction for nearly a quarter of a century. I remember Dr. Price for many reasons. I remember him as one of the truest friends I have ever had or shall ever have. He has a great capacity for friendship, and his friendships are not limited to a small group. I remember him because of his vision and pioneer spirit. One of his great contributions is that he has lived within and yet beyond his generation. He has been years ahead in his planning and preparation for the demands of church and denominational life.

I remember Dr. Price because, being a pioneer, he had to take unjustified criticism. Some criticized him for introducing certain courses into the curriculum of the School of Religious Education. For example, when he introduced courses in such subjects as church recreation, church publicity, and audio-visual aids, there were those who felt that this was beneath the dignity of theological curriculum. Dr. Price was always ready to take such criticism if by doing so he could have persons trained and equipped when the churches or his denomination were ready for their leadership. Southern Baptists owe to him a debt which they can never repay because of his willingness to think ahead, absorb criticism, and yet keep his spirit.

However, I remember Dr. Price especially because he gave direction to my life. He visited on my college campus just prior to my graduation. During his brief stay I had only a few minutes with him in the corridor of the college administration building. There was

not time to find a place to sit during our conference, so we simply stood and talked. In that ten or fifteen minute conversation the whole course of my life was changed. I wanted to equip myself for teaching. He suggested that I come to Southwestern Seminary that fall and enrol in the School of Religious Education.

In those days Texas was a long way from Tennessee. I had never been west of the Mississippi River. I could not imagine my going that distance to receive an education, and besides, there was no money at hand. But upon his return to Southwestern he talked with Mrs. W. E. Kimbrough, the superintendent of the dining hall, made it possible for me to work there as a waiter to earn my tuition, and on three hundred dollars of borrowed money I enrolled in Southwestern Seminary in the fall of 1926 to begin work on my Master of Religious Education degree. The day we met, Dr. Price turned the corridor of our college administration building into a classroom. In a few moments his divinely timed visit changed the whole course of my life. I shall not live long enough to express my full gratitude to God and to him for this contribution.⁷

Then, Price is always a man of action, but a man whose actions are directed by God. Lord Rosebery wrote some words about the saintly Thomas Chalmers that could be appropriately used of J. M. Price: "It should be said that his saintliness was not that of an anchorite brooding in religious solitude. Here was a man bustling, striving, organizing, speaking and preaching with the dust and fire of the world on his clothes, but carrying his shrine with him everywhere."

⁷ W. L. Howse, *Those Treasured Hours* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1960), pp. 57-58.

Determination, Wreathed in a Smile

DR. W. R. WHITE ONCE characterized J. M. Price as “determination, wreathed in a smile.” That determination led him to almost unbelievable accomplishments during the last fifteen years he headed the School of Religious Education.

The growth of his school was phenomenal. By 1941 its enrolment was not too far behind that of the School of Theology. That year the latter had 13 professors and an enrolment of 419. The School of Music had a faculty of nine full-time and part-time teachers, with an enrolment of 108. The School of Religious Education had 6 full-time and part-time teachers, with an enrolment of 307.

Price’s determination to offer the best curriculum possible kept him busy adding new facets to his course of study. His basic areas were Church Administration, Psychology and Counseling, and Principles of Teaching. And how comprehensive they were! Under Administration his students were made familiar with church and denominational polity, with the qualifications, duties, and relationship of members of the employed church staff, and with church committees and their tasks. Surveys were made of the educational organizations of the church, and plans for effective correlation were considered.

In Psychology and Counseling, students learned to apply

psychological principles to religious work, and they became acquainted with the basic counseling techniques.

In Principles and Philosophy, they learned the history of religious education from Bible times, principles of teaching, and the philosophy of religious education.

But his courses were not all bookwork. They were very practical—so much so that he was criticized for some of them. “A class in recreation leadership in a theological seminary? A class in visual education? And crafts? Won’t these reflect on the dignity of the school?” But Price went ahead with his plans. And there was always a demand for workers trained in his school.

Suddenly, without warning, World War II began. War years were troubled years, filled with change and conflict. In 1942 Dr. Scarborough, who had served as president of the seminary for twenty-seven years, retired, to be succeeded by Dr. E. D. Head. That was the year Price’s book *Vital Problems in Christian Living* was published.

The next year, 1943, Price edited the book *Baptist Leaders in Religious Education*. The Southern Baptist Convention was approaching its centennial year, and Price felt that attention should be called to the leaders who had envisioned a program of religious education. The publisher’s note on the book states, “But for his youth and relative inexperience, J. M. Price would have deserved tribute in this volume.” The biographer notes that while he had a youthful outlook he was fifty-eight years old, and certainly he was not a novice! He had been at Southwestern for twenty-eight years. But his modesty, a very real quality in his make-up, would never permit him to classify himself as a leader.

In 1944 he and Mabel made a trip to Florida for son John’s wedding. The war was still going on. Travel was not easy. It had to be managed with great difficulty. Price suggested that perhaps one parent would be sufficient representation at the wedding. Mabel thought for a moment, then uttered an ulti-

matum. "There are others who could take your place as officiating clergyman. There is no one else who could take my place as mother of the groom. I shall go." And go they both did.

The year 1945 was a real milestone in his life. His daughter, Elizabeth, married in March, giving him his only experience in the role of father of the bride. Then Baylor University, founded during the days when Texas was a republic, celebrated her centennial. To mark the occasion, Price edited a splendid book, *Ten Men from Baylor*. The introduction, written by J. B. Tidwell, begins:

Dr. Price has plucked some of the choicest fruit from the Baylor tree and presented it to us for our pleasure, profit, and inspiration. He calls our attention to ten former students whom he regards as notable specimens of the Institution. Five are ministers and five laymen. Taken singly or combined, they manifest the excellencies that go to make up the finest type of Christian citizenship.

At Baylor's centennial graduation Price was honored with the LL.D. degree from his alma mater.

While Price, through his book, was living again with his Baylor heroes—B. H. Carroll, Pat Neff, Lee Scarborough, George W. Truett, and the others—his faculty was conspiring together to surprise and honor him. Price's thoughts were on the centennial anniversary of Baylor, but they felt that another anniversary should be observed. Price was rounding out thirty years at Southwestern, and surely this called for a real celebration. Dr. I. E. Reynolds, who had headed the School of Sacred Music for thirty years, was retiring in May because of illness. But Price, at sixty, seemed to be getting his second wind for a harder pull.

A special thirtieth anniversary brochure was printed. It listed the amazing accomplishments of the past three decades. But it contained a wistful note also.

The double page in the center of the brochure was headed "The School of Religious Education Looks to the Future."

Underneath a picture of the proposed Religious Education Building was this explanation:

Eighteen years ago Dr. L. R. Scarborough proposed that a building be erected on the campus to house the School of Religious Education. In keeping with this original plan for a complete campus, funds are now being sought for a Religious Education Building to be located on the Southwest corner of the Campus.

The Baptist Sunday School Board, through its Executive Secretary, Dr. T. L. Holcomb, has made an initial gift of \$25,000 toward the estimated \$250,000 needed for the erection of this building.

It is earnestly hoped that the friends of the Seminary everywhere will contribute funds toward the erection of this building which is so greatly needed.

As a surprise feature, letters of encouragement and commendation for Dr. Price were gathered from everywhere and bound in a volume entitled *These Thirty Years 1915-1945—A Tribute to Dr. J. M. Price*. This custom of gathering letters is not unusual today, but fifteen years ago it was a novel idea.

Letters came from faculty, other leaders in the field of religious education, denominational leaders, former students. They mentioned various aspects of appreciation for Dr. Price—his influence, his qualities of leadership, the affable spirit of the man.

Price was pleased and grateful for the recognition given his thirty years of service. He was not at all inflated by it. He realized that he was a country boy from Kentucky who had been given a task to do for the Lord. He was glad that his efforts had been in the main successful. There were still many things he needed to accomplish. But, of course, it *was* nice to be appreciated.

The famous Price grin spread over his face as he recalled the story he had told his classes about the craving for social recognition.

An old lady in Chicago visited regularly at Hull House. Finally, Miss Addams asked if she could do anything for her.

The old lady said she supposed not. Finally, however, she admitted that she would like to have one ride in an automobile. Miss Addams asked a young man to take the little old lady for a ride. He was glad to be of service, so he took her for a very long drive around Chicago. As they were going back home, he asked if there was anything else he could do. "No," she answered sadly, "you can't give me my second wish." "What is it?" he asked. "Why, I was just wishing that I might sit out there on one of those park benches and watch myself ride by," the little old lady replied.

Price chuckled. "Reading these letters is almost like watching myself ride by."

The decade of 1945-55, the years between his sixtieth and his seventieth birthdays, were busy, happy years of seeing cherished dreams come true. Price felt good physically, and he had the mental and spiritual joy that comes from seeing good things accomplished.

Two books came out of this period. In 1946 his book *Jesus the Teacher* was published. This book was an instant favorite with Sunday school workers, and everywhere people began to clamor for the author to come and teach it. Before many months had passed, people were asking that it be translated into other languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese.

In 1948, when Southwestern Seminary was commemorating her fortieth anniversary, thus rounding out four decades of service, Price edited the book *Southwestern Men and Messages*. This book was on the order of his earlier *Ten Men from Baylor*, but differed in that short biographies of twelve men were given, followed by an outstanding sermon, address, or article from each. One wishes that Price had included himself in this company of pioneers at Southwestern—Carroll, Ray, Scarborough, Ball, Barnes, Conner, and others. But, again, his modesty forbade him to do this.

But the crowning accomplishment of the decade came when in 1949 the long-awaited, earnestly-prayed-for Religious Edu-

cation Building was erected. What a story lies behind that statement!

Back in 1915, when Price came to Southwestern, there were only two buildings on the campus—Fort Worth Hall and the Woman's Building, now Floy Barnard Hall. World War I came along, and there was no more building for awhile. In 1925 two things happened. Mrs. George E. Cowden of Fort Worth gave \$150,000 for the construction of a home for the School of Gospel Music (now the School of Church Music), and Price had an architect to draw a proposed plan for a Religious Education Building.

In 1926 George E. Cowden Hall was completed. Intended for a music building, it served many other purposes. The chapel was there, the book store was there, classrooms were there, as well as studios and practice rooms.

Price rejoiced with his friend I. E. Reynolds when Cowden Hall was erected. But, oh, how he yearned for a building to house his own school! He approached Dr. Scarborough and laid the case before him. Scarborough agreed that the building was needed and that he would lead in the securing of funds for it.

Then came the depression. Building was out of the question. The problem was to keep the seminary going. As the country slowly pulled out of these crippling depression years and began to look up again, Price started talking once more of the urgent need of a Religious Education Building. Of course, the School of Theology needed a building also.

Classes were constantly increasing, both in number and in size. They were meeting in every available space. The class in Recreational Leadership met out-of-doors when the weather permitted. The class in Dramatics met in the basement of the Woman's Building. The kindergarten was held off the campus. Offices for professors and seminary personnel were crowded into the most out-of-the-way places. They were located even in dormitory bedrooms. Nothing could have been needed more on the campus of Southwestern Seminary than new buildings.

In July, 1944, Dr. George W. Truett died. Dr. Truett had been a trustee of the seminary from its beginning and president of the board of trustees for almost fourteen years. Many, many Southwestern alumni attended his funeral. G. Kearnie Keegan, president of the alumni association, gathered a group of former students together, and they decided that a lasting memorial to this great man of God—an adequate auditorium on the campus—should be erected. A fund-raising campaign was launched.

The idea began to grow. Dr. L. R. Scarborough was ill, and was probably nearing the end of his life. (His death occurred less than a year after that of his friend Truett.) He, too, should have a memorial. There should be a wing of the building to house the School of Theology and administrative offices, to be named Scarborough Hall.

Again the original concept was enlarged. There was a crying need for library space. A wing should be added to house the library. It would be named Fleming Library in appreciation of William Fleming, Fort Worth businessman and Baptist deacon, an active trustee and friend of the seminary. And so a campaign was pressed to build a Memorial Building, with a central rotunda, Truett Auditorium, Scarborough Hall, and Fleming Library.

Price was heartily in favor of more buildings. But he did not want his proposed building pushed aside in favor of the new one. And he protested mightily that this should not be done. For this he was sharply criticized. "You're going to defeat the entire effort. Why don't you wait until this building is completed before you publicize the need for yours? This will cost \$1,400,000. That's a lot of money. Why not let us complete it before you solicit funds for yours?"

Price did not see it that way. After all, he had kept an architect's drawing of his dream building before him since 1925, while the Memorial Building was not thought of until 1944. He felt that he should campaign for his building simultaneously with the other. As Dr. Ralph Churchill expressed it,

"The tenacity and persistence of Dr. Price prevailed, and fund-raising efforts for the Religious Education Building were begun."

Price put forth herculean efforts to raise funds among the alumni and friends of the school. The drive began in 1945. The building committee held its first meeting in January, 1947. But it was frustrating to realize that building costs were mounting faster than money was coming in. The first estimate of the cost of the building was \$250,000. As late as May, 1948, the estimate was raised to \$325,000. In September of the same year the low bid was \$365,000. When finally built and equipped, the cost of the building was \$457,000.

But Dr. Price was not to be daunted by the magnitude of his task. He saw to it that a committee was appointed in the Tarrant County Baptist Association to raise funds for the building. Trustees were asked to allocate one third of the money designated by the Southern Baptist Convention for the seminary's capital needs to the Religious Education Building Fund. State alumni groups were asked to take as their goal ten dollars per alumnus. Publicity material was sent to all former students of the school. The faculty and student body contributed liberally. The Baptist Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Convention-wide Woman's Missionary Union gave \$25,000 each.

The formal ground-breaking ceremony for the building was held October 6, 1948. Early in 1949, when Dr. Price was away from the campus, the faculty of the School of Religious Education got together, without his knowledge, to discuss an appropriate name for the building. There was a perfect unanimity. Everyone felt that the building should be named J. M. Price Hall in honor of the founder and director of the school. Price was surprised, touched, and delighted by their action.

Fortunately, his money-raising efforts did not cripple the campaign to build Memorial Hall. Both that building and Price Hall were occupied at the beginning of the school year 1949-50.

Price Hall was described in the *Southwestern Bulletin* as follows:

This building, the first of its kind ever to be built in the United States, is unique in that it is designed to function as a model for teaching all phases of religious education, both practical and academic. Besides classrooms, it contains offices for faculty members, a faculty room, a large recreation room, a kitchen, a parlor and an office suite for the director of the School. It also contains a model church office; a demonstration mimeograph room, with the various types of modern duplicating machines; and a chapel with seating capacity of five hundred. The chapel is equipped with stage facilities for the production of dramatics, worship services, and general religious programs. All of the classrooms, and the chapel, are provided with electrical outlets and facilities for the use of audio-visual aids in teaching and demonstrations. A modern inter-communication system is provided for all offices and utility rooms.

Raising the money, working with the architect and contractor, watching the building go up, and equipping it properly had taken its toll of time and energy. When the task was completed, someone asked Price how he felt. "Why," said he, "I feel like the soldier in the Pacific Islands who had been under a terrific strain for two years. He was soon to return home. When asked what he would do there, he said, 'I am going to get a rocking chair, pull it out on the front porch, and sit there for one solid month. After that, I may rock just a little.'"

Time to Retire

LIFE WAS NOT ALL happy fulfilment. There were dark threads in the tapestry, too.

On New Year's Day, 1949, the message came that his brother Joe had died very suddenly. Joe's home in Paducah had been the family gathering place since the death of his parents. Joe's death left a great void in his life. He recalled his brother's early efforts to teach him to spell. He felt a deep gratitude.

In September Price relinquished his pastorate at Webb Church, after serving there for twenty-one years. He felt reluctant to leave but knew they deserved a full-time pastor.

Then in 1950 came the Korean conflict. His two youngest sons, Joe and Jim, were called into the armed services. Wonderfully, they suffered no misfortunes and stayed hale and hearty.

In 1951 there was a change in seminary presidents. Dr. Head retired, and was succeeded by Dr. J. Howard Williams. This was the third president with whom Price had worked.

A heavy blow came in 1954, when his beloved pupil and co-worker, his Timothy on whom he expected his mantle to fall, Dr. W. L. Howse, went to Nashville to become director of the Education Division of the Baptist Sunday School Board. It was a strategic position, a place of tremendous service. Price realized that fact as soon as he had recovered from the disappointment of seeing Howse leave the School of Religious Education. Still, it hurt to see him go.

But Price stayed too busy to grieve overmuch about any disappointment. He continued his teaching and administrative duties. He searched for the best-equipped people to add to his faculty. He added to his curriculum. He sought outstanding young people for his school. He prepared sermons. He wrote books and articles. He outlined chapel talks. He spoke to all kinds of Baptist assemblies and gatherings.

With a chuckle he remembered Carolyn Wells' lines:

Youth is a silly, vapid state;
Old age with fears and ills is rife;
This simple boon I beg of Fate—
A thousand years of Middle Life!

It seemed to him he'd need a thousand years to write all the letters, make all the trips, prepare all the speeches, and do all the things that needed doing. And he didn't want to crowd his schedule so much that there was no time for his hobbies—sight-seeing, planting pecan trees, and hunting.

Along with the heartaches and the ever increasing responsibilities came wonderful joys. He saw his son and namesake become dean of the School of Religious Education at the New Orleans Seminary. He became a grandfather. He and Mrs. Price made a trip to Europe, Palestine, and Egypt.

But when 1956 rolled around, Price had reached the age of seventy-one. He knew it was time to retire. He had headed his school for forty-one years. He had taught longer at Southwestern than any other professor, even his friend W. W. Barnes, whose record was forty years. It was time for a younger man to take the reins and shape the policies. That younger man was Dr. Joe Davis Heacock, on his faculty since 1944.

He recalled that Douglas Southall Freeman had written of Dr. Truett, in the introduction to his biography which had been published during Truett's lifetime: "Any man who has held the same pastorate for forty-two years is an institution." He wondered if Freeman would call him an institution.

Forty-one good years! And in this year of retirement everyone was heaping honors upon him. How often he had said, in lecturing to his classes: "Adler has put the drive for recognition or the social drive as the dominant thing in human experiences. Everyone wants to be recognized favorably, and a failure to get such recognition creates a feeling of inferiority."

"If I believed half the things they are saying about me this year, I might get the swelled head." He got more satisfaction in thinking about the service being rendered by the graduates of his school. Two hundred and seventy-six of them were teaching in seminaries and colleges. There were 1,058 of them engaged in local church work—ministers of education, youth and elementary directors and church secretaries. There were 194 denominational workers and 28 chaplains. How proud he was that 332 missionaries had gone out from his school.

That year the graduating class was named for him. And what a class it was! Fourteen candidates enrolled for the D.R.E. degree—far more than ever before in one year. There were also more candidates for the M.R.E. degree, for the B.R.E. degree, and for the Associate in Religious Education.

A great appreciation dinner was held for him at the seminary on May 10, 1956. His friends urged him to buy a new suit for the occasion, but he demurred, saying that no man needed a new suit when he was retiring! The time for new suits was when a man was taking a job. Besides, some of his friends from Webb would be there, and they wouldn't recognize him if he was too dressed up. Mabel insisted, and he was quite resplendent at the dinner, with new suit and white carnation in his lapel.

Dr. W. L. Howse came from Nashville to serve as master of ceremonies for the dinner, and Dr. C. Adrian Heaton journeyed from Philadelphia to bring the principal address.

When called upon to respond to the eulogies, Price said, "It is an unusual privilege to have the opportunity of listening in on one's own obituary, and it is even more remarkable to be able to respond to it."

During those days of special honor to him the Fort Worth *Star Telegram* carried several articles in praise of his service.

There were splendid tributes to him in the *Congressional Record*. Someone asked what he thought of this most unusual honor. "Why, I like it," he grinned, "and, besides, it's such good publicity for our school." One such tribute was from the Honorable Price Daniel of Texas.

There were other honors. A large poster was prepared and circulated, centered with the picture of Dr. and Mrs. Price taken at the dinner. All around it were pictures of outstanding people who had sent their tributes, along with a reproduction of their messages. In one corner was the letter from Gov. A. B. Chandler of Kentucky, which began:

Although I have not seen you for many years, I know that your career of service has been marked by the same humble devotion to duty as a man of God that distinguished you when you were pastor of a little church in Corydon, Kentucky. At that time I was a newsboy in Corydon, and you were one of my customers. I remember you as a source of inspiration and spiritual strength for the youth of our little town and as a leader in the ways of our Lord for all who knew you, and I know that during the years since then you have touched the lives of thousands and indebted them to you forever for the greatest gift that life can bring, a knowledge of the eternal truth of the Word of God.

The *Southwestern News* of May, 1956, carried a double-page spread, giving his picture, the picture of Price Hall, tributes from leaders everywhere, a brief outline of his accomplishments, and a completed list of firsts in Southwestern's School of Religious Education.

The tributes came from nine different states, from Switzerland, and from Brazil, under the caption "At Home and Abroad the Leaders are Price Trained." Only one of them is given here.

Even before I could understand English . . . I liked Dr. Price's smile and jokes, even though I could not understand why he was

smiling. I liked to hear of Dr. Price as the beginner of the School of Religious Education which influence could never be measured.

DAVID GOMES, Executive Secretary, Home Mission Board, Brazilian Baptist Convention, Rio de Janeiro, and Director, Bible School of the Air, Brazil (M.R.E., '48)

The outline of his accomplishments went:

John M. Price, B.S., A.M., Th.M., Th.D., Ph.D., LL.D.

Administrator—Director, School of Religious Education, Southwestern Seminary, 1915–56.

Educator—Past-President, American Association of Schools of Religious Education.

Teacher—53 years.

Preacher—Kentucky, Rhode Island, Texas, 50 years.

Writer—Magazines, newspapers, periodicals, journals . . . ¼ million copies of his books translated in four languages.

The list of firsts that never failed to thrill him are:

First school among Baptists to offer vocational training in religious education (1915).

First school in America to offer a religious education diploma (1917).

First school among Baptists to offer a doctor's degree with a major in religious education (1919).

First in requiring supervised field work as a requirement for a degree (1920).

First to initiate a Baptist Sunday School Superintendents' Conference (1920).

First vocational conference in religious education (1921).

First demonstration kindergarten in a Baptist seminary (1921).

First school requiring academic prerequisites for degrees from Baptist seminaries (1922).

First and oldest Vacation Bible school among Baptists (1922).

First school to offer special seminary courses for noncollege graduates (1923).

First building in America designed exclusively for teaching religious education (1950).

First school of Religious Education among Southern Baptists to be accredited (1951).

First school among Southern Baptists offering credit courses in Age-Group Work (1919), Recreational Leadership (1921), Vacation

and Weekday Schools (1921), Secretarial Training (1922), Religious Publicity (1922), Craft Work (1923), Church Finances (1923), Baptist Student Union Work (1923), Religious Drama (1924), Visual Aids (1926), Religious Counseling (1933), and Church Library Work (1948).

The honors were many and well deserved. But some people whispered: "How will he feel when August 1 comes—the actual day when he is no longer dean of the school, the day when Dr. Heacock officially takes over? Won't it hurt to relinquish a job he's held for forty-one years?"

When that day came, he was on the other side of the world, speaking to Baptists there, and there was a sense of fulfilment.

The dates of his trip were July 23 to September 16. He later referred to the jaunt in a chapel talk as "Fifty-seven days without buttermilk," or "Around the world with one suitcase." Every day was high adventure and sheer delight. In Calcutta he marveled at the cows roaming the streets and the crows riding garbage trucks. In Rangoon he gasped when he saw the gilded spire of the Shwe Dagôn Pagoda, towering higher than the dome of the Capitol at Washington, with its tons of flowers brought there daily. In Hong Kong he was greatly interested in the Henrietta School and the Hong Kong Baptist College. He made a generous pledge to both. He felt humbled to see his book *Jesus the Teacher*, translated into Chinese, on sale there. In Japan his son Jim, in the Naval air service, met him for a brief visit. Other stops were Taipeh, Manila, and Singapore.

But the real purpose of his trip was to speak for two successive weeks, first at the Pan Australian Youth Conference (really a Sunday school conference, as they were not enlisting adults in their Sunday school) and then at the Triennial Assembly of the Baptist Union of Australia. The program of the first meeting advertised: "Meet Dr. J. M. Price. A fluent speaker, he is well equipped with all the information and answers as to how to revitalize Sunday School work. He is well fitted to advise on the extension of your programme to include an Adult Department."

At the second meeting Australian Baptists set up a Sunday School Board, selected a secretary, and elected an editor of publications.

One day he received a very imposing-looking invitation incriminated with a gold seal at the top. It read:

The Lord Mayor of Hobart
requests the honour of the company of
Dr. J. M. Price
at Afternoon Tea in the Town Hall
on Tuesday, 4th of September, 1956 at 4 o'clock
R.S.V.P. to
Secretary to the Lord Mayor

"It's a good thing I bought that new suit in May," he thought, "since I'm being entertained by a Lord Mayor."

When he reached Seminary Hill on September 16, the school session had started, and the School of Religious Education was doing amazingly well without his hand at the helm. He remembered a Scripture verse in Isaiah, taking it out of its context and rejoicing in the words themselves, "Tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant."

He was retired, but as director emeritus of the school he still had his office in Price Hall, and he still had much to keep him busy. There was a new book stirring in his mind that he wanted to write, entitled *Mastering Life's Problems*. (This was published in 1958. In 1959 came his book *Formative Factors in Christian Character*.) There were talks to be prepared, trips to be planned, sermons to be outlined. There were young people who needed counsel and professors who needed encouragement. There were squirrels waiting to be shot and buttermilk waiting to be drunk! And life looked as good and promising to him as it had when he was a barefoot boy in Kentucky.

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01041 2296